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Editorial

Developments in Theological Education

In this year, which marks the jubilee of the United Theological College, Bangalore, as well as of the resumption of University level teaching at Serampore, with the institution of the B.D. degree, there is evidence that those who are responsible for theological education in India are making considerable efforts to raise the standard.

There is first a revision of the syllabus and regulations for the B.D. degree which the Serampore Senate approved in January 1960 and which is now being introduced. Some of the notable features of this revision may be mentioned:

(i) The Senate now makes compulsory, even for graduates, an entrance test in Scripture Knowledge, General Knowledge and English. This was formerly done by some colleges, but it is intended now to ensure in this way that all students for the B.D. degree will have laid the necessary foundations to enable them to make full use of the three years of the degree course.

(ii) The degree course itself has now been divided into two parts (I and II) of which the first part will normally be taken in the students' first year and which may be examined by affiliated colleges themselves. The subjects dealt with in this part are selected to ensure a good general knowledge of the fundamentals of a theological course covering Biblical studies, an outline of Church History and of Christian Doctrine, an Introductory study of the History of Religion and the Life and Work of the Christian minister.

In Part II of the course, which will cover two years, there is provision both for detailed study of the main subjects of Christian Theology and also for a generous selection of subjects, especially in Practical Theology, to enable the different colleges to give the emphasis which they think desirable. It is to be noted that the Senate has now laid it down that in most of the studies there will be some acquaintance with selected texts chosen from among the classics of the Christian Faith.

(iii) After experimenting with other ideas for five years, the Senate has re-introduced a Thesis as a requirement for all who wish to qualify for the B.D. degree but, in the case of external candidates, an alternative is provided where it appears that the student will not have access to the books and the expert advice necessary for a proper thesis.

Part I of the new B.D. degree course has already been introduced for students registered in 1960 and Part II will come into effect from June 1961.

There appears in the Senate and among the B.D. colleges a general opinion that the revision, prepared after much consultation, is a satisfactory one. It will be of interest to see how it works during the next few years.

The second important development is the inauguration of the system of 'Accreditation' of theological colleges which has been started as from 1st July, 1960, under the auspices of the Board of Theological Education and with the co-operation of the Senate of Serampore College.

This plan is the outcome of discussions extending over several years. It is intended to provide a means whereby theological institutions, whether affiliated to Serampore or not, may be inspected and also helped to measure their own achievement.

It is hoped that, when this system is in full working order, the public generally will have the means of knowing at once the standard of work which may be expected from any of the theological institutions concerned throughout the country. Success in the scheme will also facilitate the exchange of students who wish to go on to higher study after completing a course in a different institution.

The scheme has taken a great deal of preparation and, for its success, a considerable amount of time and detailed work will be required from a good number of people. In the initial stages at least the Registrar of the Senate has been appointed as Secretary for the Accreditation Commission. This emphasizes the fact that, while all institutions do not see their way to seek Serampore affiliation, they have been able to share in a scheme whereby they can co-operate in maintaining a uniform standard in the whole field.

The Christian Doctrine of Man

The Indian Christian Theological Conference will be held in Gurukul, Madras, from 28th December, 1960, to 1st January, 1961. It is being organized under the auspices of the Board of Theological Education on the National Christian Council. The theme of the Conference will be 'The Christian View of Man in Society'. The Convener is Dr. P. David, Principal of Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute. A few remarks on the general subject of the doctrine of man may not be out of place here.

Man is a thing of nought. Today he is, and tomorrow he is not. What matters most to many is that he should have enough to eat and drink. This is what the man in the street thinks of man. It is not very different from what the communists and materialistic capitalists think of man. They are concerned primarily about the needs and comforts of human life, and their entire strategy

is geared to this one end. If food and shelter are the only things that a man requires, why do men abhor gaols, where these needs are provided? Bread is indeed necessary for man, but man does not live by bread alone. Even when there is a reasonable provision of bread and shelter and certain amenities of life, men suffer from frustration and a deep inward dissatisfaction.

Hinduism is comprehensive. It has some striking things to say about man and his destiny. Man is divine because his essential self is at one with the Absolute. This is the glory of man. And yet man is miserable in that that he suffers from an incurable tendency to regard himself as a finite creature. He is also depressed because he feels that he is chained to the wheel of repeated births and deaths under the influence of remorseless 'karma'.

Through these conflicting views we have to battle our way to the Biblical doctrine of creation. We should allow ourselves to be taught by that book of beginnings, *Genesis*. God created man and He created him in His own image. We cannot understand man apart from God and His purpose. Man is created by God and he is created in the likeness of God. This is the glory of man. But man, as he is, is wretched. We have a notable description of this in the 7th Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. This is every man's experience of misery. It is not easy to get at the cause of man's unhappiness. It is sometimes stated as 'original sin', an expression which is a source of much misunderstanding. Therefore we shall want a sound exposition of the 3rd Chapter of *Genesis* which tries to explain this universal handicap of mankind in the form of a child's story. It is always a temptation to want to show whether Catholic or Protestant theology interprets the story of Adam and Eve aright. This may be a useful exercise, but is not in the end very important.

Salvation is a doctrine with which we must come to grips when considering man's destiny. What is the salvation with which the Bible is concerned? This at once involves us in questions about sin and forgiveness.

We ought not to forget that we have a Gospel to preach. In order to be able to fulfil our obligation we need to know to some extent what the people around us are thinking and saying about man and 'moksha'. But our purpose should be very practical. We should aim to say with the utmost clarity and brevity what man is in the purpose of God, and address ourselves to the fallen condition of man, and say with a certain force and cogency what man can become by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We should aim at being faithful witnesses and guard against the temptation of wanting to appear as merely clever theologians. In discussing the details of man's place in society, the overall significance of man should first be examined.

It is of course easier to state general principles, as has been done above, than to work out their implications in real life. It is

presumably the task of the coming Conference to work out the social implications of such doctrines. We wish it well in its task.

The Church History Association

There is a report in this issue on 'The Church History Association of India'. The secretary of the Executive Committee writes:—'We, the members of the Executive, appeal to the authorities in Churches and Missions in India, as well as to teachers and students of Church History, to co-operate with the Association in realizing its aims and ideals. With this end in view, we would welcome more members. We also ask for the continued interest of all well-wishers and friends of the Association in its work'. Further particulars may be had from the Revd. D. A. Christadoss, Serampore College, Serampore, W. Bengal.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Our relation to others, even when we name it a relationship of love, is governed by the law that we should 'render evil for evil'. We do not perceive in the other the One . . . that is, the good which he is not. Rather, we hold him liable for being what he is. This making men liable for what they are is to render to them 'evil for evil'. It is this failure of apprehension which makes of our whole behaviour an inert mass of evil. Along this line of evil we all, without exception, move.

KARL BARTH: The Epistle to the Romans.

Bhakti-Mārga or Deva-Mārga ?

P. DAVID

Dr. Bhagavan Das brought out a book in 1955 entitled *The Essential Unity of all Religions*—an encyclopaedic volume giving information not only on all the major religions but also on philosophies and sciences! The author believes that if only men *know* and realize the essence underlying all religions, there will be peace and goodwill among men on earth. On every page the author's pulse of faith and concern is felt that peace, goodwill, fraternity and understanding are possible, and that the basis shall be the Universal Religion or Religious Experience. He devotes the whole book to describing this Religious Experience under three aspects: the cognitional, the emotional, and the volitional; that is, jñāna, bhakti and karma. The author further believes that jñāna it is that synthesizes the other aspects of the religious experience, bhakti and karma. The Gītā-kāra certainly vouches for bhakti as the basis, and also as the ultimate resource of religious experience. Rightly speaking, it is not proper to separate the different elements of religious experience in any sense mechanically; much less is it just to oppose one element to another. The purpose of the article is to conduct a brief discussion on the origins, the nature and the way of bhakti with special reference to the religious situation in India.

Since the publication of Dr. Appasamy's *Christianity as Bhakti Mārga*, there has not been a substantial contribution to the debate from either side to provoke further thought and research in the realm of bhakti as the basis and source of religious experience. Dr. Appasamy, as one brought up under the mystic tradition from his earliest days, naturally evinces a bias to mystic interpretation of bhakti. Consequently, such themes as the power and the universal dominion of human sin, the need of the impact of God through His redemptive act on the Cross, constant repentance and regeneration are indeed marked with a mystic bias and hence have been weakly portrayed and presented as constituting the bhakti-base of religious experience (cf. *A Christian Theological Approach to Hinduism*, p. 21ff.). Further, a constant flood of light has been shed on the study and interpretation of bhakti in the context of the results available due to researches conducted in the fields of history, religions, archaeology, etc., and also of the results available due to introspection and self-examination in the fields of practical life; the advance of science and culture, agitations and rebellions, destructive weapons and wars. Dr. Bhagavan Das, criticizing H. G. Wells for ignoring human

vitalities and inevitable sins, says: 'The flaw in his scheme (as in most other utopias, including Marx's and Russian Soviet's, as they seem to have discovered in actual working) is that (even allowing full effect to education, which he very rightly stresses as all-important) he assumes righteousness achieved too facilely; does not take sufficient account of the metaphysical Law of Duality, which works as indefeasibly in human psychology as in any other department of Nature; reduces too easily to negligible minimum egoistic urges and passions; and makes all human life, too readily, one round of picnics and scientific research, to occupy the vast amount of leisure for all, which he creates, by magic of pen. One gets an impression that he believes that pairs of opposites are neither inevitable nor needed; that the universe can be remanufactured, with help of clever machinery, in terms of one only of each such pair; of pleasures only, without pains; of lights only, without shadows; of loves only, without hates; of comforts only, without bothers. Then, he provides no spiritual foundations for his material superstructure of pleasant physical sensuous life. He does not say anything about the finer spiritual domestic affections, maternal, paternal, fraternal, filial; nor about meanings of life, or soul, or after-life. All current religions are duly suppressed by his new world-makers; but no substitute, satisfactory or even unsatisfactory, is provided; nor does he say that his new humanity has so entirely changed its psychology that it does not care for any such trifles, any more.'

Here we only have to understand by Dr. Bhagavan Das's Universal Religion the Way of Bhakti. Then we are set on our subject now.

ORIGIN AND NATURE OF BHAKTI

Some writers consider that Brahmanism tended to be centred exclusively either on ritualism at one stage or on mystical speculation at another stage; and as such, they say, it has no room for the origin or development of bhakti in its structure. Therefore the idea of bhakti and the religion based on it has been contributed by the Dravidian religion of the land. Some others propound also the theory that Hinduism must have borrowed the religion of bhakti from Christianity; and to confirm their view they quote from the Nārāyaṇīya Section of the Śānti Parvan of the Mahābhārata the visit to the Śvetadvīpa of Nārada who 'saw white men without senses, not eating anything, sinless, with heads like umbrellas, making a sound like that of thundering clouds and devoted to Bhāgavat.' But 'it is a wrong view to hold that the Āryans leaned to ritualism or to metaphysics and that it was the Dravidian culture that brought in the rich tributary stream of devotion and love. The Āryan culture was as much home-born in India as any other culture and the Dravidian culture, which was also home-born and should be described in terms of latitude and longitude rather than of race, blended with the Āryan culture long, long ago' (*The Evolution of Indian Mysticism* by K. S. Rāmaswāmi Śāstri). It is also a wrong

view, it must be said, to hold that the religion of bhakti was borrowed from Christianity.

Bhakti is human and is not limited by racial or geographical boundaries; much less is it determined by them. It is natural, and its expression is observed in all religions including primitive religion. Perhaps if we consider the meaning of the word bhakti etymologically, we may get some light and lead on this. The word bhakti comes from the verbal root *bhaj* meaning to share, to partake of, to resort to, to have recourse to, to practise, to enjoy and experience, to serve, to worship, to choose, to obtain as one's share, to love, etc. Bhakti is given the meaning: separation, portion, devotion and faithfulness. The word bhakti-mārga is defined as the way of devotion, that is, devotion to god regarded as the way to the attainment of final emancipation, an eternal bliss. Bhakti-yōga is loyal devotion, and bhakti-rasa is a sense of devotion. Summing up all these we can bring out some three most prominent marks characterizing bhakti: (1) Choosing the deity, (2) sharing with the deity and (3) worshipping the deity. Whether we derive the origin of religion from a sense of fear and instinctive need for protection, or from a consideration of being bound or linked with gods, it is inevitable that the moral and religious agent *must respond to the awe-inspiring and all-overpowering impact*. That is, the person must choose and will the behaviour he adopts. In doing that, he chooses his deity. Then he shares his lot with *his* deity. I know *his* should be interpreted very widely. This *sharing* is to be understood as the spontaneous outpouring and the inner utterance of the soul of the person. Finally, this utterance is concretely expressed when he *worships* the deity he has chosen. That is, he offers himself wholly, in thought, word, and deed, to his god. It is a peculiarly divine-human encounter in which God overpowers man and guides him in the path of liberation. Therefore, bhakti-mārga is really Deva-Mārga, that is, the way of God. The mārga is not impersonal, but it is intensely personal; it is not man-centred but God-centred. God holds the devotee by the hand as it were and guides him. The *mārjāra-kiśōra nyāya* (cat-hold theory), one of the bhakti schools in the south, precisely teaches this truth. Bhakti-mārga is not an impersonal way but it is *God-bearing-the-devotee*. The hymns of the Ālvars and Nāyanmārs, the bhāgavata poetry of Bhakta Pōtana, the songs of a host of Bhaktas in the North and in the West of India together with the wonderful scriptures of Bhāgavata and Bhagavadgītā and other bhakti scriptures loudly proclaim that God carries the bhakta onwards to the bliss of liberation. Therefore, bhakti-mārga should be more accurately described as Deva-Mārga. On the basis of this interpretation Christianity shall more appropriately be portrayed as Chrīṣṭa-Mārga rather than as bhakti-mārga.

All religious experience is based upon bhakti as explained above. We are concerned with the origin and development of bhakti with special reference to the religious situation in India, particularly the Hindu. Hinduism is a wide term referring to the

religious faith and practice of people belonging to the country of India. As such, strictly speaking, today it should include primitive religion, the Dravidian worship, the Ārya dharma, the Christian and the Islamic faiths, to mention only a few major ones. But the usage of the term Hinduism warrants only a particular reference to the religion of the Vedic or Ārya dharma developed through the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Purāṇas. Even with this particular and limited reference Hinduism is still inclusive. It includes principally Vaishnavism, Śaivism, Śāktaism, and Brahma Samāj, which have arisen, prompted by and based upon a special emphasis of bhakti and a theistic conception of God; and Advaitism, which claims to include the above in its empirical aspect of reality, while it is itself the true way of knowledge—the final bliss. Therefore those who follow the Advaita Vedānta advocate the way of knowledge as the best and those who follow the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta prefer as the surest the way of bhakti. The modern leaders of Hindu thought, however, propound that Vedāntism is the best and the most universal way obviously treating bhakti and knowledge, and even karma, as different aspects of the same way (cf. C. Rajagopalacharya's book, *Hinduism : Doctrine and Way of Life*).

THE MOVEMENT OF BHAKTI IN HINDUISM

But we have still to trace the historical origins of the movement in Hinduism emphasizing bhakti. We have seen in our discussion above that bhakti is natural and human and is basic to all forms of religious experience. Where it emerged as a movement laying special emphasis on bhakti, it had happened so in reaction against certain dogmatic assertions and practices of ritualism and literalism, philosophy and materialism, on the one hand; and the actual life of society full of sin and evil, sorrow and suffering which could not be set right by the religions so called, on the other. Men in all religions at such times took to investigating the inner and deeper resources of religious experience; and the discovery was that men had to look up to, depend upon, and live and act in and for God in order finally to be liberated.

The religion of R̥gveda, as revealed particularly by the earlier hymns, is predominantly marked by heart-felt devotion, simplicity and trust. The gods they worshipped were believed to be real; the fear and piety were dictated by faith and trust in them as guides and deliverers.

‘O Varuṇa, whatever the offence may be
That we as men commit against the heavenly folk,
When through our want of thought we violate thy law,
(Rita)
Chastise us not, O God, for that iniquity.’ (R.V. VII, 89 : 5)

But one sadly misses this note of spontaneity and trust on the part of the worshippers, when one comes to examine the religion of the Brāhmanas, the period of ritualism. Religion becomes mercenary

and mechanical; the priests ask for more money for being mediators; and the people believe that they cannot directly approach gods except through the mediation of the priests. Neither do the priests understand all that they mutter in their mediatory prayers. It is against this type of mechanical and mercenary 'priestism' and ritualism that Viṣṇu and Rudra, who were only minor deities in the Ṛigveda, assume theistic importance in this period. Even the Upanishadic religion evinces a love for mystical speculation ('aham brahmāsmi', 'tat tvamasi'), but the note of trust and devotion for a deity is very much missed here too. Besides this arid ritualism and mystical speculation, in this general period, there were other tendencies seriously contending against and challenging the very basis of religious life and experience. The Chāravākas, the Jainas, and the Bauddhas denied the vedas and disbelieved the reality and existence of gods. As Dr. Radhakrishnan says, the period was one of contradiction and chaos. Against this total background, those who believed in gods, those who trusted in them for life and redemption, severely reacted and mustered their moral and spiritual strength and built their worship (bhakti) around the personal deities of Viṣṇu and Śiva. Once the sects were formed, their leaders became rivals and began to propagate their faiths vigorously through upanishads, through the epics, through purāṇas, and through discussions and lectures. 'All these sections of the community did everything in their power to win adherents to their cause, and that is why we have in the Mahābhārata several stories indirectly expressing their different convictions' (*Origin and Early History of Śaivism in South India* by C. V. Narayana Ayyar, p. 72). The movement assumed great proportions and turned out a mighty stream flowing all over the country. Concerning Vaishnavism Dr. D. S. Sarma observes, 'the fountain of Vaiṣṇava bhakti rises in the Gītā, passes through the songs of the Ālvars, gathers its waters in the system of Rāmānuja and flows out later in varied streams all over India' (*The Renaissance of Hinduism*: Madras: Law Journal Press, 1944, pp. 40).

There is one element in the general structure of the bhakti religion, which we have not touched before; it is an important constituent and it must be mentioned. Is bhakti from non-Āryan sources? We raised this question at the beginning and set it aside in a general context. Now that we are discussing the bhakti movement with special reference to Hinduism, we must properly answer the question. The following are some of the reasons that prompted the question: (1) The movement in general is opposed to caste and its rules. (2) Śaivism suggests (from our knowledge of the religion of the Indus Valley people as revealed by the archaeological studies) that Śiva was originally worshipped by the non-Āryans. The Vedic Rudra and Śiva were later identified. (3) Dr. Bhandarkar works out a theory with substantial evidence that Vāsudeva, the supreme deity of the Vaiṣṇavas, was a Sāttvata non-Āryan deity originally, and was later identified with Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu of the Gītā. (4) The followers of the bhakti way are not particular about,

and sometimes are opposed to, the karmas prescribed by the scriptures as a way of liberation. (5) They insist that religious instruction shall be given in the vernaculars, not necessarily in Sanskrit.

All these marks indicate a special situation. The non-Āryans inhabiting India when the Āryans came in must have been devotees of deities such as Śiva, Vāsudeva and Kṛishṇa. The Āryan rishis were devotees themselves, worshipping Agni, Varuṇa, Indra, the Sun, etc. The dominant character of the Vedic and Upanishadic religion is one of absorption. Therefore the non-Āryan elements, wherever feasible, were happily absorbed. Such an absorption had been there from the beginning; but a definite stage was reached by the time of the Atharvaveda. Rudra and the Rudra-devotees occupy a considerable space and attention subsequent to the time of the Rīgveda; and in some of the Upanishads, notably the Swātesvetara Upanishad, Rudra was identified with Śiva as a gracious and personal deity. In the same way the non-Āryan deities, Kṛishṇa and Vāsudeva, were identified in the Gītā with the Āryan deities, Viṣṇu and Kṛishṇa, the son of Devakī. Further, the presence in India of Jewish and Christian elements from very early times, and of Islamic elements in the later part of the tenth century A.D., should not be ignored as contributing to the general pool of bhakti life and thought in India (cf. Bhandarkar, p. 38). The course of development and the process of absorption of these different elements was long and complex. But the Bhagavadgītā attempts in a wonderful way a synthesis of the different elements on the basis of bhakti as the final way of liberation.

GĪTĀ AND NEW TESTAMENT: DEVA-MĀRGA

The prominent elements constituting bhakti can be mentioned again as we want to illustrate them from the Gītā and the N.T. (1) When an individual chooses to worship a particular deity, it does not mean that *he* has chosen the god. Psychologically, such an individual is overpowered by the deity; there are the starry heavens above and nature around and within, which he himself has not made and cannot make; he has no other way of responding to this impact than to choose and worship the deity. (2) Self-insufficiency and want, sin and suffering stand as the inevitable lot of the individual. Liberation by one's self alone without the help of God is found impossible. (3) Therefore dependence upon and trust in the grace and redeeming work of God is the only way for the liberation of the individual. This is the Deva-Mārga. It is the self-offering and self-committal of man to God. Examples from the Bible and the Gītā will make the meaning clear.

‘We know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. . .’ ‘So I find it to be a law

that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am ! Who will deliver me from this body of death ? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord ! So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin' (Rom. 7 : 14, 15 and 21-25).

'na cai 'tad vidmah kataran nā garīyo
yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ
yān eva hatvā na jijīvisāmas
te 'vasthitāḥ pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ.'

(' Nor do we know which for us is better, whether we conquer them or they conquer us. The sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, whom if we slew, we should not care to live, are standing before us in battle array ').

'kārpaṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāvaḥ
pṛcchāmi tvām dharmasammūdhacetāḥ
yaç chreyaḥ syān niścitam brūhi tan me
śiṣyas te 'ham sādhi mām tvām prapannam.'

(' My very being is stricken with the weakness of (sentimental) pity. With my mind bewildered about my duty, I ask Thee, tell me, for certain, which is better. I am thy pupil; teach me, who am seeking refuge in Thee ').

'na hi prapaśyāmi mamā 'panudyād
yac chōkam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām
avāpya bhūmav asapatnam ṛddham
rājyam surāṇām api ca 'dhipatyam.'

(' I do not see what will drive away this sorrow which dries up my senses, even if I should attain a rich and unrivalled kingdom on earth or even the sovereignty of the gods ').
—*Gītā* II : 6-8.

Before we quote further to bring out the further progress on the life and thought surrendered to Deva-Mārga, it is worth our while to underline certain notes in the confessions of both Paul and Arjuna. (1) Both of them confess that they do not know what and how to do or act under the circumstances (' hogaḥ katargazomai ou ginōskō ' ; ' dharmasammūdhacetāḥ ' or ' na cai 'tad vidmah '). (2) Both suffer from and feel the pain of a duality and tension in their life and thought (' sārṣ' versus ' pneuma ' , ' agathon ' or ' kalon ' versus ' kakon ' ; ' yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ ' , ' kārpaṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāvaḥ ' , ' yaç chreyaḥ syān niścitam brūhi tan me '). (3) Both see no other way for their redemption from such

a situation than the Deva-Mārga which involves their absolute surrender to God and the latter carrying them through ('Talai-pōros egō anthrōpos, charis tō theō dia Iēsou Christou'; 'kār-ṣaṇyadoṣapahatasvabhāvaḥ', 'na hi prapaśyāmi mamā 'panudyād / yac chōkaṃ ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām', 'śiṣyas te 'ham sādhi mām tvām prapannam').

This is from the side of the bhaktas. What is the response from the Godhead? Let us examine it.

'Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls' (Matt. 11 : 28-29).

'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness' (2 Cor. 12 : 9).

'Do not yield your members to sin as instruments for wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness' (Rom. 6 : 13).

'sarvaguhyatamaṃ bhūyaḥ / śṛṇu me paramaṃ vacaḥ iṣṭo 'si me dṛḍham iti / tato vakṣyāmi te hitam' (Bh. G. 18 : 64). ('Listen again to My supreme word, the most secret of all. Well beloved art thou to Me, therefore I shall tell thee what is good for thee').

'śreyo hi jñānam abhyāsāj / jñānād dhyānam viśiṣyate dhyānāt karmaphalatyaḡas / tyāgaḥ chāntir anantaram' (Bh. G. 12 : 12). ('Better indeed is knowledge than the practice (concentration); better than knowledge is meditation; better than meditation is the renunciation of the fruit of action; on renunciation (follows) immediately peace').

'sarvadharmān parityajya / mām ekam śaraṇam vraja ahaṃ tvā sarvapāpebhyo / mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ' (Bh. G. 18 : 66). ('Abandoning all duties, come to Me alone for shelter. Be not grieved, for I shall release thee from all evils').

As before, we shall underline some points in the utterances made above to the suppliant devotees. Both of them realized that they were in a miserable and helpless plight. They trusted in and prayed to God that He alone should redeem them from the tragic situation of sin and perdition. To such as they were, came from God the call to hope and the assurance of redemption. The characteristic features of the Deva-Mārga are : God *addresses* the individual; the individual *acknowledges* his unworthiness and his sin; God *helps and enables* the individual to yield himself to Him unreservedly and to live harmoniously with himself and with others.

(1) God addresses the individuals in both the cases ('deute pros me'; 'bhūyaḥ śṛṇu'). In the N.T. the call was in fact addressed to the followers in general; but there should be no discrepancy if we assume Paul, as a would-be follower, among those addressed. Paul was in particular addressed in the vision he saw on the Damascus road: 'Saoul, Saoul, Ti me diōkeis' (Acts 9 : 4), and on another occasion: 'arkei soi hē chāris mou hē gār dunamis mou en as theneia teleioutai' (2 Cor. 12 : 9). (2) It is assumed that the individuals are under a heavy yoke which is suppressing them to the point of hopelessness, misery, and death ('pāntes hoi kopiōntes kai pephortismenoi'; 'śreyo hi jñānam abhyāsāj / jñānād dhyānam viśiṣyate dhyānāt karmaphalatyāgaḥ'). Arjuna has been here led from one path to another each harder and heavier than the one that is presented next. Krishna clearly says that the meditation of the Impersonal Absolute is harder than the worship of the personal Lord: 'kleśo 'adhikataras teṣam avyaktasaktacetasaṃ.' 'On Me alone fix thy mind, let thy understanding dwell in Me. In Me alone shalt thou live thereafter. Of this there is no doubt.' 'If, however, thou art not able to fix thy thought steadily on Me, then seek to reach Me by the practice of concentration, O Winner of wealth (Arjuna).' 'If thou art not able to do even this, then taking refuge in My disciplined activity, renounce the fruit of all action, with the self subdued.' 'Better indeed is knowledge than the practice (of concentration); better than knowledge is meditation; better than meditation is the renunciation of the fruit of action; on renunciation (follows) immediately peace' (*Gītā* 12 : 8, 9, 10 and 11). Therefore, just as the hearers of Jesus were 'heavy laden' with the Jewish system of works and sacrifices, so were Arjuna and others of his day heavy-burdened with works of various sorts and different methods of concentration. 'Sarvakarmaphalatyāgaṃ' implies the fruit of sacrificial karmas. (3) In both cases the individuals were presented with a new line of action demanding total surrender and were assured of eternal peace ('arate ton zugon mou eph' humās, māthete ap' emou, heurēsete anapausin tais psuchais humōn'; 'mām ekaṃ śaraṇam vraja, sarvadharmān parityajya, ahaṃ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi').

CONCLUSION

It must be borne in mind that it is not a discussion on Arjuna and Paul, or on *Gītā* and N.T., touching all the issues; but they are briefly quoted for illustrating certain features of what I described as Deva-Mārga. The *impact* of God as Creator and Governor is not limited to particular races or countries. It is universal and human. The mighty phenomena of nature in and around us, the sun, the moon, the sky, the clouds, the waters, hills, rivers, storms, diseases, pains and sorrows, the vicissitudes of life, all these 'beset me behind and before' and lay their hand upon me. Therefore the psalmist rightly cries: 'Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?' So originated religion and

devotion (bhakti). A response of fear and adoration, of trust and dependence, of love and gratitude to God was the original nature of religion. It was full of heart-felt devotion and trust. As civilization advanced, religion became organized and mechanical; and the original bearings were lost. Worldliness, corruption, lust, ambition, anxiety, pride, all these invaded even the priestly quarters. Some people were disgusted and greatly agitated over this development and turned to recapture the original form and content of religion. They desired most a free and direct approach to God, a priesthood of all believers. Thus arose what is called the religion of devotion or Bhakti-Mārga, which I prefer to call Deva-Mārga.

The development of this devotional religion in Hinduism has been a long and complicated process. It involves different elements, Primitive, Dravidian, Aryan, Christian, and Islamic. But they are all absorbed and synthesized in a unique way in the Deva-Mārga.

What are the main features of the Deva-Mārga? (1) God's overwhelming *impact* is there besetting the individual before and behind. He cannot but *respond* to Him. (2) In the presence of the good Lord he realizes his unworthiness and *confesses* his tragic tensions, his sins and shortcomings. (3) He is shown by God that salvation or liberation is possible only through *absolute surrender* to Him. This means, God alone will carry him through as does the cat its young one.

Krishna said :

‘Doing continually all actions whatsoever, taking refuge in Me, he reaches by My grace the eternal, undying abode.’

‘Surrendering in thought all actions to Me, regarding Me as the Supreme, and resorting to steadfastness in understanding, do thou fix thy thought constantly on Me.’

‘Abandoning all duties, come to Me alone for shelter. Be not grieved, for I shall release thee from all evils.’

—Gītā 18 : 56, 57 and 66

Arjuna resolved :

‘naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛtir labdhā / tvatprasādān mayā ’cyuta
sthito ’smi gatasamdehaḥ / kariṣye vacanaṁ tava.’

(‘Destroyed is my delusion and recognition has been gained by me through Thy grace, O Acyuta (Kṛṣṇa). I stand firm with my doubts dispelled. I shall act according to Thy word’).

—Gītā 18 : 73

Paul experienced :

‘Christō sunestaurōmai. Zō de ouketi egō, / zē de en emoi Christos. Ho de nun zō en sarki, en pistei zō tē tou huiou tou theou agapēsantos me kai paradontos heauton huper emou.’

(‘I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me’).

—Galatians 2 : 20

Books and Publications Received

S.C.M. Press (c/o Y.M.C.A., 5 Russell Street, Calcutta 16) :

J. Macquarrie. THE SCOPE OF DEMYTHOLOGIZING. 25sh.

E. J. Tinsley. THE IMITATION OF GOD IN CHRIST. 21sh.

E. L. Kendall. A LIVING SACRIFICE. 21sh.

T. Boman. HEBREW THOUGHT COMPARED WITH GREEK. 21sh

Macmillan :

H. Trevor Hughes. THE PIETY OF JEREMY TAYLOR. 25sh.

H. M. Relton. STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. 21sh.

Hodder and Stoughton :

W. Corswant. A DICTIONARY OF LIFE IN BIBLE TIMES. 25sh.

F. R. Barry. ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS (CHURCH AND MINISTRY). 12/6sh.

N. van Houten. BARTJE, MY SON. 10/6sh.

Lutterworth :

Hendrik Kraemer. WORLD CULTURES AND WORLD RELIGIONS. (Proof). 35sh.

World Student Christian Federation, Geneva :

ed. Philippe Maury. HISTORY'S LESSONS FOR TOMORROW'S MISSION. (No price mentioned).

The Tract and Book Society, Bangalore :

ed. J. R. Chandran. WORSHIP AND THE CHURCH'S MISSION AND UNITY. Re.1/50 or Rs.12/- per dozen.

(The above books have either been reviewed in this issue or are awaiting review).

Recent Christian Theological Publications in the Regional Languages

2. TAMIL

D. RAJARIGAM

The Protestant church in the Tamil country, which had its inception in the Danish-halle Mission of the eighteenth century, has been growing for the past two and a half centuries in stature and consciousness, as well as in numerical strength, as a result of the ministry of the Word of God through the power of the native word and the pen. The 250 years' history of Tamil Christian literature shows how, in all these years, it has played its rôle, growing steadily both in quality and in quantity, in the establishment of the Tamil church. It also shows how the different denominational churches have been jointly endeavouring to develop a literature to serve the spiritual need of the Tamil Christians. Needless to say, how much more it should be made to play its rôle as a dynamic communication of the living Word in these days, in order to meet the challenge of the powerful forces that come from without.

Since the attainment of freedom, India has undergone a number of changes politically, economically and culturally. The rapid changes in these spheres have created a new mental climate among Tamilians. Though Christian literature in Tamil has always had to fight against odds, never before had it to face such a strong opposition as it is encountering today. Erotic, filthy and poisonous literature is being produced most promiscuously, and it paralyses the spiritual life of Tamilians.

Besides, the Saiva Siddhanta Kazhagam and other Hindu Muts are steadily producing distinctly Hindu-Tamil literature at an amazing speed. When non-Christian literature is ranged against Christian literature in such a mighty array, the latter would lose much ground, if it did not make more powerful counter-attacks and take fresh strategic moves. The Tamil church has taken cognizance of this fact, and so it is taking possible measures to produce new types of literature to meet the

changed situation and to help to develop the Tamil church to fuller stature and greater strength. In this short article an attempt is made to present a brief account of the present state and future prospects of Tamil Theological literature.

Today the Tamilnad Christian Literature Committee (T.C.L.C.) acts as the literature committee for the Tamil country, and is recognized as such by both the Tamilnad Christian Council and the National Christian Council. Fifteen Publishing Houses and Printing Presses are represented on the committee, apart from the fifteen representatives appointed by the Tamilnad Christian Council. This committee makes efforts to co-ordinate the work of the various Christian publishers, both regarding publication as well as distribution, with a view to avoiding overlapping of effort and consequent wastage, and at the same time to promote faster distribution. The first step taken by this committee was to appoint a sub-committee to survey the existing Christian literature in Tamil. The survey of this sub-committee was then published in 1959. The newly prepared catalogue has helped to some extent the co-ordination of the publications and their distribution. But the pace of production is far from satisfactory, when we realize the strength of the powerful forces ranged against Christian influence today. The following tabulation, taken from the reports of Mr. J. Daniel, Secretary, T.C.L.C., giving the publications of 1958 and 1959, shows that there is need for more effort from some of the Publishing Houses.

Publisher	Number of publications	
	1958	1959
The Christian Literature Society	... 20	25
Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge	... 5	1
Evangelical Literature Society	... 8	4
Tirunelveli Diocese	... 9	8
Madurai Diocese	... 5	*
Strict Baptist Mission	... *	10
Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission	... 17	*
Layman's Evangelical Fellowship	... 3	1
Tranquebar Publishing House	... 3	*
Tirumaraiyur Theological College	... *	4

The above tabulation of publications provides an illuminating picture. The fall in the production of books is very glaring. One cannot but feel a sense of distress to note that the fall in production comes at a time when increase in production of

Note : * indicates want of information.

Christian literature is most called for, to counteract the many influences against the Gospel. One of the difficulties encountered by the publishing concerns seems to be that of commanding the necessary resources for a publishing capital. With a view to helping such publications, attempts have been made to start an independent publishing capital which may serve as a revolving fund for advancing the capital required as a loan. Another is the lack of responsible awareness of the situation and the lack of literary sensitiveness and creative venture to meet its demands. Most of the churches, as the second East Asian Christian Literature Conference (Hakone, Japan, August 1958) says, do not give Christian literature the place it deserves in their thinking, planning and budgeting. The amounts allotted for literature in the annual budgets of certain churches are comparatively negligible or practically nil. Unless there is an awakening in the minds of the leaders of the churches with regard to the dire need for more new literature and they plan a well-thought-out scheme for the production of this vehicle of communication of the Christian message, both to the Christians and to the non-Christians, the challenge of Christian literature is bound to become greater as the demands constantly increase with growing literacy and population in the Tamil country.

The catalogue of Tamil Christian literature, published by the C.L.S. in 1959, contains a list of all the books available today. A study of the catalogue will show that there are 52 books under Biography, 18 under Bible Study, 28 under Commentaries, 20 under Doctrine and 107 under Devotional Literature. It is evident that there is no proper balance among the different fields of theology. A very surprising fact to note is that there is none under Church History and under the functional field. It is a consolation, however, to see three books under Biography which deal with the biographies of Church Fathers, Martyrs and pioneers of the Church in the mission field. At the last meeting of the T.E.L.C., held at Madras on 17th March, 1960, the Secretary stated that the first volume of the *History of the Church*, written by the Rev. D. Rajarigam, was in the press and that the second volume would be out in the near future.

All the books on Doctrine (except *Towards an Understanding of Christian Faith* by Bishop Kulendran) and most of the books under Commentaries are translations from English works. It is under Biographies and under Devotional Literature that we find a sizable number of original works from the pen of Tamil writers. Translations are, of course, needed badly. But they should be reproductions rather than literal translations, in order to remove the oft-criticized 'foreignness' in them. Christian terminology in Tamil affords a particular difficulty in the production of Christian literature intelligible to the modern generation. For Biblical language is gradually falling into disuse in our generation. Translating Biblical and theological words into

modern Tamil creates much confusion. This difficulty is accentuated because the Tamil language has a non-Christian background. Moreover, as there is no consensus of opinion regarding the theological terminology in Tamil, the different authors use different words for the same English expression. Basic research on the theological terms in use is also badly needed; for it is doubtful wisdom to use some specifically Hinduistic terms to explain the Christian content. This work can only be undertaken by men who are competent both theologically and linguistically. In this context mention must be made about the attempt to publish a Theological Vocabulary. The Tamil Theological Literature Committee at its last meeting held at Madras on 18th June, 1960, appointed a small committee to prepare this booklet. When this booklet comes out, there will be some uniformity in the usage of Tamil Christian terminology thereafter.

While the present state of affairs with regard to theological literature in Tamil is not as it could be, there is every hope of seeing a better future in this sphere of production, when the two schemes of the T.C.L.C. are completed successfully. The first scheme is to select and translate books from the Christian Students' Library and World Christian Books to fill the gaps in the existing literature and to include new material in the scheme, after approval for language, standard and content. Since 1956, this scheme is being worked out by slow degrees, and the following books have been published up till now: *John's Witness to Jesus*, *The People of God in the Old Testament*, *The Christian's God*, *Christianity and Communism*, *The Parables of Jesus*, *Hebrews*, *Outlines of Christian Doctrine (Volume I)*, *Acts of the Apostles* and *I Corinthians*. The translations of eight more books of these two series are ready for publication.

The second scheme is the five-year plan, chalked out through the Tamil Theological Literature Committee, to promote the textbook programme of the Theological Education Fund of the International Missionary Council. The Rev. A. D. Manuel is its convener and a full-time worker. The responsibility of the committee is to make a clear and comprehensive survey of the present situation and to lay bare the needs, with suggestions for those who can, at the expense of the Fund, help to meet the need. This committee met at Madras on 18th June, 1960. A five-year plan has been worked out to write about forty books on the basic and essential texts anticipating a grant of Rs.90,900 from the Theological Education Fund of the I.M.C. along with Rs.57,250 from local resources. The Theological Education Fund, thus, offers a great and new opportunity to break through the present situation regarding Tamil theological literature.

The Virgin Birth¹ Again

M. E. GIBBS

There still seems to be something more to be said on the subject of the Virgin Birth. In the first place, what is the evidence for the virgin birth as an historical fact? There is a great deal of confusion of mind on questions of this kind among theologians who are not trained historians. It is impossible to prove the historicity of any event as we prove a proposition in mathematics and, whilst certain occurrences in the past rest on such strong evidence that it would be extremely difficult to deny them, there are few occurrences about which no one has ever undertaken to show that the accepted view is mistaken. We must not require stronger proof of the historical facts in the Bible than an historical scholar would require for the facts of secular history. Moreover, certain events are much easier to get reliable evidence about than others. One of the most elusive is what really happens at the conception of a child. This is an event about which only the father and mother of the child know very much, and even they may not be entirely certain. In the case of our Lord's birth we have two obviously independent accounts, that in St. Matthew's gospel told from Joseph's point of view, that in St. Luke's from Mary's. The two accounts agree on the main points: the names of Joseph and Mary, their betrothal, the fact that Mary became pregnant before intercourse had taken place between them, the birth at Bethlehem and the upbringing at Nazareth. But there are considerable differences which it is not altogether easy to reconcile. St. Matthew's gospel says nothing of a previous residence at Nazareth, and St. Luke nothing of the visit of the magi or the flight into Egypt. The story of the coming of the magi is the most difficult to fit in, though it becomes easier if we rid our minds of the traditional expansions of the story and concentrate on what the gospel of St. Matthew actually says about it; but even in St. Matthew the story seems to have gained something in the telling. A recent suggestion that the magi were in fact magicians or fortune-tellers of no very exalted spiritual or intellectual status, and that the story came to be told to show how

¹ A previous article on this subject, by the Rev. J. Nelson, appeared in *The Indian Journal of Theology* for July 1959, and one by Bishop Hollis in April 1959.

the Incarnation had abolished their magic arts, may very well be true. So long as books were written in the form of rolls, writers were pressed for space, and the kind of compression which St. Luke was capable of can be seen by comparing his account of the Ascension in the gospel and in the Acts. The fact, therefore, that St. Luke does not mention the sojourn in Egypt, probably a very short one, cannot be given much importance.

I

In examining the historicity of the story of the Virgin Birth, two points need to be clearly brought out. In the first place, it was not suggested by the passage in Isaiah 7:14. This contains no suggestion of a virgin birth in the Hebrew, where the word used means simply 'young woman'. It is decidedly a less usual word than that which is always used where it is intended to emphasize virginity. Mary and Joseph were Aramaic-speaking Jews of Palestine, Hebrews of the Hebrews; and are unlikely to have been influenced by the Septuagint translation *παρθένος*. There seems to have been no expectation that the Messiah would be born of a virgin, as is shown by Mary's reaction to Gabriel's message (Luke 1:34). The claiming of Isaiah 7:14 as a prophecy of the virgin birth of the Messiah looks like an afterthought, resulting from the belief that every detail of the life of Jesus Christ must have been foretold in the Old Testament.

Secondly, the story is told in a very matter-of-fact manner. This is something that happened in the real world. In this it differs entirely from the common mythological stories in which a mortal woman becomes pregnant by a god. In these stories, the problem of her reputation or of the rearing of the semi-divine child is either ignored altogether or provided for as miraculously as the birth. There is nothing of this in the nativity stories in the gospels. The only departure from the normal course of nature is Mary's pregnancy without intercourse with a man. Joseph's reaction as described in St. Matthew's gospel is exactly what might be expected; and though the removal from Nazareth to Bethlehem would help to make it less evident to all the world that the baby had been 'born too soon', all adverse comment does not seem to have been avoided. The comment in John 8:41 can probably be interpreted as a taunt based on these rumours.

Why should the story of a virgin birth be told at all? There are really only two possible explanations. Either it is true, or the stories are told to cover up an illegitimate birth; at least, pre-marital intercourse between Joseph and Mary. On the evidence, we have not the choice between a virgin birth and a birth in wedlock according to God's holy ordinance. We have the same dilemma as we have about the person of our Lord. He was either God or not a good man. Our Lord was either born of a virgin, or He was born of fornication.

The problem of our Lord's Davidic descent and the two genealogies falls to be considered next. It is clear that our Lord was generally accepted as being of David's line, as, for example, the cry of Bartimaeus shows (Mark 10:46-48). As any abnormality about His birth was certainly not generally known in His lifetime, whatever rumours might be abroad, this could only arise from His being the reputed son of Joseph; and therefore Joseph's genealogy becomes relevant. The difference between the two genealogies is best explained by adoption. That in Matthew is obviously artificial, the 'fourteen generations' being obtained by the omission of some names. Between Joram and Uzziah, as the book of Kings shows, came Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah; and Jeconiah was the grandson, not the son, of Josiah. Jeremiah 22:30 suggests that Jeconiah was childless; and if this was so, Shealtiel, the father of Zerubbabel, may have been an adopted son from another branch of the descendants of David, and this may account for the difference between the names in Matthew 1:6-12 and Luke 3:27-31. The destruction wrought by the capture of Jerusalem and the captivity would account for the difficulty of finding any nearer descendants of the seed royal. A further adoption of Joseph, or perhaps his grandfather, Mathan or Mathat, into the elder line of Zerubbabel, would reconcile the later differences.

There are difficulties about the date of the census which took Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem for the birth of our Lord. St. Luke was an accurate recorder of contemporary events and conditions, but this census occurred probably a decade or two before he was born, and this is just the period about which the memories of most of us tend to be most confused; and in those days there were no handy books of reference to settle the question. There seems therefore to be some confusion, which further archaeological discovery may clear up, about its exact date and nature. It seems to have been a revision of land registers rather than what we now know as a census, and it would be natural for Joseph, as a descendant of the house of David, perhaps even, by adoption, its head, to possess land in Bethlehem. This land could not, of course, have been continuously in the possession of the family since before the exile; the destruction wrought by Nebuchadnezzar was too great for that; but when Zerubbabel returned as governor, it seems clear by comparing Ezra 2-4:6 with the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, that he had thoughts of restoring the rule of the house of David; and it would be natural for him to acquire land in the ancestral town of Bethlehem. The land once acquired, there is no reason why it should not have continued in possession of the family till the time of Joseph. The church historian Eusebius quotes Hegesippus, a second-century Jewish-Christian writer, as describing how Domitian had search made for the descendants of David, who

were also kinsmen of the Lord, and how two grandsons of Jude the Lord's brother were produced, who owned a little land which they cultivated themselves, as was proved by their horny, toil-worn hands. There is, however, no indication of the district in which their land lay, and, the siege of Titus and capture of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 having intervened, it may not have been identical with Joseph's holding.

For some centuries after the return from exile, the Jewish state was narrowly bounded by a twenty mile radius from Jerusalem. But about 100 B.C. under the Hasmonean kings, the richer district of Galilee was conquered. It would be natural for enterprising families to see a future in settling in the new district instead of remaining in poverty-stricken and overcrowded Judea. The residence of Joseph and Mary in Nazareth may well have been the result of a migration of some of the house of David not more than a century before. If so, it would be perhaps natural for them to keep themselves to themselves, and to be anxious not to be too closely identified with the half Gentile population of Galilee; whilst they kept possession of their family land in Bethlehem.

All this explains why our Lord was thought of as a possible Messiah because of His Davidic descent, a fact which He never denied, although He was obviously not anxious to stress it, for fear of the misunderstandings attached to the idea of Messianic kingship. The picture of the good shepherd looks back to such passages as the description of the shepherd king in Ezekiel 34:23, 24; the fulfilment in the triumphal entry of the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 is certainly a claim to kingship, though to kingship of a special kind; nor did our Lord deny His kingship before Pilate (John 18:33-37). Again, the question about Psalm 110 (Mark 12:35-37), though it is meant to suggest that the Messiah is more than a son of David, certainly suggests that He is at least that.

But our Lord would not be in fact as well as by repute a son of David according to the flesh unless Mary as well as Joseph were of Davidic descent. It is unlikely that St. Paul who states this emphatically (Romans 1:3) was ignorant of the Virgin Birth. The argument from silence is of little historical value, and the wording of Galatians 4:4 definitely suggests that he did know of it. The idea that St. Paul knew little of our Lord's earthly life and that he was not interested in it does not bear scrutiny. As he himself said, 'This hath not been done in a corner' (Acts 26:26). He must have learnt a great deal about it even during his days as a persecutor. Later he had plenty of opportunity for learning more from those who had been 'in Christ before him', as well as from St. Peter, St. John and James the Lord's brother. St. Luke, to whom we owe the nativity stories, was one of His most intimate companions for years. Is it likely that St. Luke only learnt about the virgin birth of our Lord after the death of St. Paul? Or that, if St. Luke knew about it,

St. Paul did not? But there is a more definite indication than this in the account of the annunciation. The angel Gabriel speaks of the Lord God giving to Mary's son 'the throne of His father David'. Now this very passage makes it clear that a virgin birth is to be expected, and Mary, at this time only betrothed and not married to Joseph, could not be certain that he would not repudiate her, as St. Matthew's gospel shows he very nearly did. In this context, therefore, this phrase can only point to Mary's being also of the house of David. There is nothing unlikely in this. Marriages between near cousins were and are common among Jews, and would be the more probable in a group of orthodox families living in what must have seemed to them the semi-pagan atmosphere of Galilee. That Mary's cousin Elisabeth was of a priestly family is no objection to this. Nothing like a caste division was involved, and there are other examples in the Bible of intermarriage between royal and priestly families.

III

What is the spiritual value of the virgin birth, and why was it so entirely fitting that our Lord should be born of a virgin? It is surely not to be found where Barth places it, in the fact that it was entirely God's doing, without the necessity of the co-operation of human wills. Mary was clearly free to accept or reject the great vocation to which she was called, otherwise her words in 5:38, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to Thy will', would have no force. Moreover, Joseph's will was also involved, quite as much as if he had been the actual father. He had to accept the situation and fulfil his vocation of foster-father, though his acceptance might bring discredit on him as well as on Mary. There is here no overriding of human freedom.

What happens at a human conception? In the first place, something purely physical, analogous to breeding in animal and even in plant life. The condition of this is the coming together of male and female, sperm and ovum. But, strangely enough, at the human level, every act of copulation does not result in conception. Something more, some special exertion of the creative power of God, is evidently needed. The virgin birth involves the belief that, just once in human history, conception took place without copulation. It was therefore strictly a new creation, that which normally comes from the male being supplied by the creative power of the Holy Spirit which 'moved over the waters' at the time of the original act of creation. Our Lord was the second Adam, the new man. This does not involve a strictly biological inheritance of original sin which had to be broken; for original sin could equally be inherited through Mary's human nature. (The late and quite unhistorical doctrine of the immaculate conception of Mary is intended to solve this difficulty). Our Lord had to identify Himself completely with

sinful man, otherwise He could not 'become sin' for us and offered on behalf of all mankind the one acceptable sacrifice. The human nature which He assumed had to be a full and complete human nature.

But a human conception differs from similar events in the lower creation because it involves the coming into existence of a new personality, a new spiritual being. Where does this new soul come from? Is it inherited like the physical characteristics, or is something more required? If so, then this something more can only be the creative activity of God, though it seems strange that this creative act is so often performed when the intercourse has been the result of adultery or rape. This is part of God's dangerous gift of freedom to man.¹ But, in the conception of our Lord, alone among human conceptions, there could be no question of the creation of a new soul. The pre-existent Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, was to become man.² This was an utterly different matter from an ordinary human conception. The withholding of the creation of a soul after fertile intercourse had taken place would be as great an exception to the ordinary course of nature as a virgin birth would be.

The incarnation involved the complete union of the divine and human natures in the person of our Lord. It was neither the birth of a demi-god, half-human, half-divine, as in many pagan mythologies; nor the deifying of an ordinary human being; nor was it in any sense illusory. 'The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.' In the nature of things, the purely historical evidence that this happened by means of a virgin birth is inconclusive, but it is sufficient for those who see in Jesus Christ the incarnate Son of God. It involves neither an overriding of the freewill with which God has endowed man, nor the exaltation of virginity in itself over marriage according to God's holy ordinance. It does involve the possibility of a new beginning for sinful and now redeemed humanity.

¹ God acts by respecting and concurring with the secondary causality with which He has endowed His creatures, not (except in strictly miraculous interventions) by suppressing it or superseding it. We might indeed sometimes find ourselves reflecting, if the thought might be allowed without irreverence, that it would be a good thing if God interfered a little more in the process of human conception than He does; certainly His concurrence in the process might seem sometimes to involve a remarkable connivance with human acts which are positively against His will. This is, of course, only a special case of a very pervasive problem, the problem of God's extreme forbearance with human perversity and His extreme respect for human freedom; it does not differ in essence from the question why God did not strike Hitler dead or why He doesn't 'stop the atom bomb' (Mascall: *Christian Theology and Natural Science*, pp. 282-3).

² There is discontinuity because something happened in the Incarnation which had never happened before; he who became man was *God* (op. cit., p. 310).

Dr. Kraemer's New Book

J. G. ARAPURA

One rarely comes across a book on the subject of culture and religion that is so serious in its purpose as Hendrik Kraemer's *World Cultures and World Religions*.^{*} This is of course characteristic of Kraemer, whose primary motivation in writing anything is evangelism. The author has demonstrated that no other way of life can be so concerned about the cultures and religions of mankind as Christianity. There are ever so many books on the subject written from humanist standpoints and we value them for the information they give, but no information comes to us without some interpretation or other. The author declares at the outset that 'this book is written from a definitely Christian standpoint and therefore ultimately will make an effort to offer a Christian interpretation' (p. 19). The pretension of humanism is that it is impartial and unbiassed, but the fact of the matter is that every standpoint has a faith behind it and therefore not truly unbiassed or impartial. The honest thing to do is to admit the bias and then give good and convincing reasons for the same. Kraemer announces 'I hope to show that to write and interpret from a distinctly Christian background, with a fair knowledge of the facts, about this fascinating meeting of cultures and religions is as biassed or unbiassed an effort as any humanist attempt pretends to be' (p. 20).

The larger part of the book is dedicated to elaborating the various aspects of the modern meetings of religions and cultures. These meetings call for a dialogue.

The author's thesis is that 'the dialogue between the great cultures and religions has still to begin' (p. 22). All that has been happening is merely a preparation of the ground. One gets the impression that the author is talking rather about the encounter of the culture and religion of the West with those of the East rather than the encounter between Christianity and the cultures and religions of mankind as such. However, in the encounter such as it is, the Christian criteria have to be employed. The author tells us that in this book his special concern is two-fold. 'First, to find some answers to specific Christian questions such as: *what*

^{*}*World Culture and World Religions (The Coming Dialogue)* by Hendrik Kraemer. Lutterworth Press. 35sh. Pp. 376. Published October 1960. Proof copy received.

is it that the Christian Church, with her peculiar message and calling, will have to face? How should she face this coming dialogue? And also *how* should she express in that situation her inherent missionary nature, which under no condition can she ever surrender?' 'Second, to show the specific Christian ferment and dynamism in Western culture, even in its present secularized form, and to find out the fundamental orientation of the Eastern religions: cultural patterns with their patent contrasts and hidden affinities to the Christian West' (pp. 22-23). 'The central issue', he tells us, 'in this coming dialogue with the grand, elusive Eastern systems of humanist thinking will, it seems to me, be to vindicate the *personal* conception manifest in Jesus Christ, and the meaning and purpose of Man and the world in the light of God's self-disclosure in the historical Jesus Christ' (p. 23). This gives us the clue as to what we shall do in the coming dialogue; and, this gives also the clue as to what Kraemer is going to unveil in the pages of this book.

I

The book contains twelve chapters with various titles. It is not possible to recount the names of all the chapters, but it can be summarily said that they all deal with the cultural and religious world scene of the last 150 years, when there have been 'invasions' of the West upon the East and vice versa, the special aspects of the resurgence of Asian religions since World War II, and finally (the two last chapters) 'the coming world-civilization' and 'the Terms of the Dialogue'.

There is a thorough discussion of the three factors that have been of decisive importance for the 'meeting' of the East and West, viz. the Western dominance, the work of the Western orientalists and the Christian Missions. The first and the third constitute, along with the spread of Western education and science, the 'invasion' of the East and the second is one of the key factors in the beginning of the Eastern 'invasion' of the West.

Some Eastern readers may be prejudiced against the author's appraisal of Western imperialism and colonialism, which are now on the way out. But it behoves the Easterners also not to be touchy about facts but to evaluate things objectively. No one can deny that Western dominance over Asia was not an un-mixed curse. Even Sardar Panikkar would not deny it. Kraemer writes, 'Western imperialism had a Janus head. The one face represented its conquest by power and subjection. The other face, however, reflects a quite different thing, viz. a spiritual conquest, which was source and stimulant of unexpected development. Magnificent as the Eastern cultures in many respects are, they would never have been able to develop from their own spiritual resources the peculiar dynamism which alone can generate such happenings as we witness at present. Their fundamental apprehensions and attitudes could not generate the new visions and

aspirations, which by the mysterious dispensation of history rather paradoxically proved to be the unintended gifts of Western "colonialism" (p. 67). The author points out two specific sides of the Western spiritual conquest. 'The first is what I propose to call the unbroken epic of Western oriental studies; the second may be called the broken epic of transmitting Western liberal culture and idealism combined with the work of social and economic uplift which became, besides administration, an integral part of the colonial governmental machinery' (p. 67). These two 'epics' are discussed extensively. The part played by Western Orientalist studies in making much of Asia, more especially India, discover itself, and arousing it to its true greatness, is explained at great length.

With regard to the permanent effect of the Western influence upon Asia there are of course different opinions in times of lasting cultural and social change. H. Dubois stands at one extreme end, arguing that no real change has or will come upon Asian Society. Reference is made to Dubois' pronouncement '(At the same time) I venture to predict that it (i.e. the Government) will attempt in vain to effect any considerable changes in the social condition of the people of India, whose character, principles, customs and ineradicable conservatism will always present insurmountable obstacles' (p. 76). It is pointed out that Panikkar (in *Asia and the Rise of Western Dominance*) rejects this view and yet believes that in spite of the really lasting impress of the West, 'Asian civilizations will continue to develop their marked individuality and remain spiritually and intellectually separate from Christian Europe' (p. 78). Kraemer criticizes Dubois to be sure, but he is also critical of Panikkar who in his opinion seems 'to leave too much out of consideration the fact that the end of Western political dominion is not the end of Western cultural and spiritual influence, nor the beginning of an era in which the digestion and manipulation of the Western influence is furthermore an exclusive affair of the Asians' (p. 78). 'Moreover', Kraemer affirms, 'we are standing only at the *beginning* of a cultural confrontation and meeting of unprecedented and incalculable dimensions, in which the conscious running and willing of man, be he Western or Eastern, is not necessarily the decisive factor' (p. 78).

II

The author quite correctly points out the immense significance of Christian Missions in the modern encounter of cultures and religions. He notes the psychological inhibition of humanism with regard to missions. 'It excels in the field of culture proper and of the arts, whether Eastern or Western. Even in the field of foreign religions. But as soon as Christianity comes on the scene (which is clearly the case with Missions) it seems as if a certain inhibition, a conscious or semi-conscious revulsion, becomes operative and distorts the picture. Not only does there appear a

strange inability to understand Christianity or Missions adequately from within, as one rightly tries to do in regard to foreign religions, on its own merit as it were, but also in regard to Missions particularly, a propensity to evaluate it first and foremost according to its faults (which are indeed many), and to misunderstand it as to its intention and rôle' (p. 84). He also notes that Eastern writers, who are often apathetic to Christianity (Panikkar is a case in point) are more objective in duly recognizing the rôle of Christian Missions in stimulating Asia. Kraemer himself tells us 'It can be said without exaggeration that Christian Missions have been great agents in the East-West culture contact which took place in this dimension' (p. 90). Furthermore, 'Christian Missions were an important instrument (together with Other agencies) for inculcating a humanization which transcended the traditional limits and opened people's eyes to entirely new channels of service . . . An important activity such as the Ramakrishna Movement is in its orientation and devoted activity unthinkable without the stimulus derived from Christian Missions' (p. 90). On our part we find Kraemer's positive estimate of Missions quite acceptable and correct. Kraemer is also fair to resurgent non-Christian religions in that he does not assume, as so many Christian writers do, that the specific 'Christian' qualities of service and concern for society are mere borrowings and as such could never be assimilated into them as an integral part of themselves. Nevertheless, we also get the feeling that he does not allow attacks from outside to be occasions for penitence and redeeming self-criticism for Missions, but tries to whittle down their importance. For he says, 'the only blame one can and must lay on Missions, looking back on the whole story, is that only rarely were they adequately aware of the obscuring of their own character, and often met a world steeped in an Eastern atmosphere and invaded by the West with Western arguments. Arguments which might ease one's own conscience, but were not a real answer to the situation as it was' (p. 91). The trouble, in our thinking, is not merely lack of imagination and inability to enter into the psychological workings of those to whom the Missions are sent, but a deep spiritual one. There is a tendency in Kraemer, one notices, to go into too much psychological explanation. There are non-psychological and genuinely spiritual factors operative in the relation of Christian Missions to non-Christian religions. As long as this is not appreciated any efforts at psychological adjustment would appear to the deeply religiously committed non-Christian as trick and deception. Frankly speaking, the aversion of non-Christians to Christianity is not due solely to the historical association of Missions with colonial and imperial powers.

One extremely refreshing feature of Kraemer's approach is that he is not a moralist beating his breast penitently or mock-penitently about the sins of imperialism and colonialism. He is objective enough to face up to the providential and 'unforeseen'

good that these ugly episodes of history brought in their wake, even though far from being a member of the exploited and oppressed community, whose besetting sin is self-righteousness, he is historically and geographically a part of the erstwhile colonizing and imperialistic world. Rather than going into any kind of needless self-reproach, he points out that all historical events are providentially over-ruled. He states 'I simply wanted to point to the mystery which is always hidden in all great historic events, and to the transcendence of the consequences of historical acts and human decisions and aims over the conscious intentions of man in these decisions and aims. Even our indispensable moral judgments are not adequate to what really happens . . . Theologically expressed: the historical process, far from being self-explanatory, requires and itself calls for a transcendent eschatological judgment' (p. 99).

III

With regard to the cultural response to the Western invasion, the author identifies four distinct entities: the Islamic, the Hindu, the Buddhist, and Chinese-Japanese. There are also sub-classifications. For instance the Chinese and Japanese responses are characteristically different though identical in a general sense. In any case the main entities are different from one another in their response to Western influence, despite some general similarities again. For instance, it is to be noted that 'the peculiar difficulty of Islam, in the storm of the Western invasion, is that in contradistinction to the great Asian cultures, its hard-core problem is theological and not philosophical. The theological problem is ultimately how to switch over in a legitimate way from a thoroughly fundamentalist, legalistic, apprehension of Revelation to a dynamic one' (p. 109). In the Hindu response, we see on the other hand a 'symbiosis of openness and self-assertion,' made possible by the very lack of clear-cut distinctions in the matter of religious belief. There are striking differences in the Buddhist and Hindu responses to the West. 'When surveying the Buddhist world's response and reaction to the Western invasion, one is struck by a certain difference from the Indian religious and cultural world in regard to the same point. The impression the Buddhist world makes is that it is more placid in comparison to the Hindu world' (p. 170). But why? 'one reason, to be sure, is the obvious difference between the sincere, gifted Hindu and the peoples who inhabit the Buddhist lands. There is, generally speaking, a superior human substance in India. This has made her the mother of a great culture and religion of a luxurious growth and variety. The peoples of the Far East, who are in spiritual endowments the equals of the Indians and therefore have similarly become creators of imposing systems of culture, differ in a peculiar way from the Indians

precisely in the measure of religious and metaphysical seriousness' (pp. 170-171). In particular, with regard to China, accordingly, the following fact is noteworthy. 'China with its relativist, pragmatic conception . . . never conceived its meeting with the West in religious terms' (p. 194). This is exactly contrary to what happened in the case of India, where the whole of life is conceived in religious terms. This is not to say that the West's meeting with China was any less convulsive, although no less productive of dynamic changes. In the case of Japan, essential seclusion and the power of Shinto are the two unmistakable traits, for if we go 'straight back to Japan's uncontaminated nature' we will find that it 'is embodied in Shintoism'. 'Seen from the outside it was an awkward performance, but the significance is that Japan, though changed in form and function by the marriage with Western civilization, did not and does not propose to change her essence' (p. 225).

Now, it has already been mentioned that the invasion is not merely one way. There is also an Eastern invasion of the West. 'It is not only in the East that there has been, and still is, an "invasion" with its ensuing reactions and responses, full of disturbances and renewed vigour. There is also an Eastern invasion in the West, more hidden and less spectacular than the Western invasion, but truly significant' (p. 228). Dr. Kraemer investigates this matter also fully. Chiefly to be noted is 'The East's negative effect on the West'. 'It is rather that a *subjective* mood of capitulation to the East is noticeable in the West. Not in the sense of capitulation to an Eastern invasion, but in that of negativism to itself' (p. 229). There are various contributory factors here. The first is what the author calls the 'self-questioning' or 'self-criticism' 'which has been going on for a long time in the West'. He considers this self-questioning to be a purely autochthonous matter; it is self-born from within, from the West's own spiritual type and its inherent dynamism; also from its own special historical course of life, full of incisive new starts in exploring the mystery of Man and the Universe, and new experiments in political forms of collective life. Just as unbroken continuity in depth, despite sometimes great changes on the surface, is characteristic of the great Eastern civilizations, so for Western civilization, despite much persistent underground continuity, the characteristic quality is revolution' (pp. 229-230). In the opinion of this reviewer never was a truer statement made on this complex issue by any one. Still he feels that the historical rôle of Christianity in the revolutionary spiritual tradition of the West, covering all aspects of life, should have been pointed to and elaborated. Especially is this necessary in view of the fact that Kraemer assumes, and rightly, that the encounter of cultures is also an encounter of religions, and vice versa. It is a refreshing thought that Kraemer is not one of those persons who assume that a discrete isolation of the Christian religion from Western culture and civilization is a ready possibility; this in spite of the

fact that a culture through which the faith has found historical expression is in no sense absolute but is in every sense under judgment by that faith. Most people come into contact with the Christian faith or any faith at the borderland where faith and culture are not clearly distinguishable. This is true, as Kraemer works it out, of the encounter of religions themselves.

IV

Another contributing factor in the mood of negativism (and of the Eastern invasion of the West) is the Eastern propaganda, conducted both by Western enthusiasts for Eastern religions and by genuine representatives of the East themselves. As for the former class there is a host of men from Schopenhauer down to Aldous Huxley, among whom Keyserling is an important name. They are all occupied with what they consider 'the weak point of Christianity', which is that it is based on a single historical fact unlike Hindu-Buddhism which is universal in its principles. Observes Kraemer, 'An ever-expanding stream of writing, scholarly, popularizing or distorting, has brought this vast world of Indian spirituality and cultural achievement within the horizon of the West and made it, apart from the growing possibilities of direct contact in our planetary world of today, an important element in the welter of opinion and orientation in the modern West, which lives and lives through the critical period of searching for a basis of spiritual unification, which it has lost.' Then he adds quite pertinently, 'for the last 60 years or so India herself has gradually acquired a sense of "mission" to the West and attempts in different ways to present the "hidden true India" to the Western world, finding a willing audience among those who are driven either by curiosity or by sincere interest' (p. 251). Of course, Vivekananda's American experience was the turning point. The trend was continued by stalwarts like Tagore, Gandhi and Aurobindo.

This Eastern invasion of the West is a significant element in the modern meeting of the religions and cultures of the world.

Dr. Kraemer is alive to the fact that political revolutions and religious resurgences are not unrelated factors, particularly in Asia. From the vantage point of this perception he discusses at length 'the significance of the political revolution in Asia since World War II and the resurgence of the non-Christian religions'. This brings us nearer to our times . . . 'The cataclysmic close of the "colonial era", the defeat of Japan in its gigantic effort to become in the name of Asia the dominant world power, the accession of the colossus China to the communist realm, the feverish endeavours of new independent peoples to become coherent nations and reasonably durable States and recognized members of the political world "community", are events of the greatest import for the cultural and religious development of Asia and for the relations and dialogue between East and West'

(p. 272), he observes. Then by way of admonition to all concerned he states, 'If ever there was an opportunity to learn the crucial importance of political and economic factors and ideas for the cultural and religious areas of life, it is now' (p. 276). Those who have had set ideas of Dr. Kraemer's view by acquaintance with his early book, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, will be forced to revise them now.

There are other surprises in store for those who have had set ideas of Dr. Kraemer. In the encounter between religions and cultures and the common stand of religions against secularism, he sees immense spiritual potentiality. 'In the present world of religious pluralism and of growing secularism in East and West, we see the unprecedented spectacle of the *real meeting and encounter of the great religions and cultures* of the East and West not only in books or conferences and retreat centres, but as an inescapable coming to grips with each other as a result of the no less inescapable interpenetration we begin to discern' (pp. 277-278). In fact this statement brings us to one of the high points in the book. Dr. Kraemer has laboured so hard not for any negative purpose but to show that a real encounter of religions and cultures is taking place before our eyes. Of course he would hasten to add the other thesis of the book, viz. that although an encounter is taking place a dialogue is yet in the future. This reviewer disagrees with the latter thesis while he whole-heartedly agrees with the former. The moot point is, how to demarcate between encounter and dialogue? It needs to be said that this reviewer has assumed a position quite contrary to Dr. Kraemer's, for, according to him, the moment from which the encounter began, an implicit dialogue also began, which has been taking place all along. The problem simply is how to make this implicit dialogue explicit and spell it out in the language of constructive philosophic conversation.

V

A parenthetic conclusion there is in this enormous treatise, which is wholly acceptable to this reviewer. He has maintained that the really crucial conflict in the realm of religion in our time is that between personalistic Christian Faith and impersonal monism, and not between a true God and a false God or between one God and many gods. Dr. Kraemer puts his finger on the same point, from a different angle. He states, 'The extraordinarily remarkable phenomenon which presents itself to us, however, is that one can perceive through various signs in the modern mind a mighty current of conscious and unconscious return to the universal "natural" religion which is strikingly expressed in the archaic systems of life and thinking and which has found its sublimest expression in the great Asian religious cultures. Especially in Hinduism, Chinese "universismus", and Buddhism.

In other words the fundamental notions, shorn of the many appendages in rite and custom characteristic of these Eastern systems of life (and world) apprehension, seem to strike a responsive chord in many leading modern minds' (p. 325). Many modern writers like Toynbee, Hermann Hesse, W. T. Stace, Northrop, etc., are discussed as articulate representatives of this trend towards 'naturalistic monism' although they are different from the propagandist.

This reviewer fully agrees with Kraemer when he inveighs against men like Northrop, Toynbee, and Hocking who can only conceive of 'religion in the universal'. There can be no such thing as a common substratum of truth for all religions. To pursue that goal is in the end to join hands with kind of religion (Asian) and oppose a religion like Christianity that understands religious truths only in terms of the Christ-revelation. It is also true that tolerance can be truly only a psychological and spiritual attitude born of the total religious awareness, even if the religious truth underlying is claimed to be particular and unique and not logical deductions from metaphysical presuppositions regarding the ultimate identity of all religions. It is here that we have to look for the sources of the paradox that Kraemer points out of tolerance becoming a dogma and in the end very intolerant.

There is a related point, however, with which this reviewer partly agrees and partly disagrees. That is with regard to the problem of 'religion in the singular'. It is quite true that religions are different from one other in such a way as to make it impossible to speak of a genus religion as against the species 'religions'. It is also true that the pragmatic attitude of wanting to use religion in the singular for purposes of fostering world peace or other Gods is worthy of condemnation. The author observes, 'The disappointing experience then follows that no intellectually construed universal religion, comprising all the necessary attributes for the unification of all minds, appears able to remove the fact that concrete religions are more steeped in their peculiar habitues and consciousness than in these wishful fictions' (p. 352).

Although this is very true we should like to add that it is possible to speak of religion in the singular, because the definition in the singular is given from points of view outside the religions. It is only in this sense we can speak of Christianity and more particularly of 'the Church'. Hence it is plausible. It is possible to give definitions of religion and determine its characteristics from a point of view outside religion altogether. Such a perspective is always necessary. That is the redeeming feature of religious men or men who are for the sake of perspective momentarily freed themselves from religious pre-occupation looking at religion from outside its domain. If that is achieved certain obligations that secularists expect from religion, and accuse it of not fulfilling, can be taken somewhat more seriously. Religions are not only in a state of encounter with each other but

also, all together, a state of encounter with the secular or even anti-religious world. This Kraemer recognizes. Here dialogues can and do happen.

We are whole-heartedly in agreement with the author when he defines the 'terms of the dialogue' and suggests, amidst other things, it must proceed from the clear-cut understanding of the Christian Faith in all its uniqueness. Many eye-brows may be raised when Kraemer suggests 'Karl Barth's anthropology in his *Church Dogmatics* may contain fruitful material for a real dialogue on this point' (p. 368). But we find the suggestion wholly acceptable.

Dr. Kraemer's book is a very serious and very elaborate study of the subject of the book. We are all grateful to him for the book, which should make all interested in the cultural and religious areas of evangelism think deeply. He makes a strong plea for a more vigorous study of religions. 'The implication of this whole situation is that the "dialogue" with the non-Christian religions should not be the concern of a few so-called experts, who are as Christians professional students of one or more of these religions. The period in which that could be the case has definitely passed. The time has now arrived when all theological thinkers have to include these new worlds of thought and apprehension in their sphere of interest' (p. 365). This reviewer whole-heartedly says 'Amen'.

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THE CHURCH HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

(A History of the Association from 1935 to 1960)

In the year 1931-32, a Church History Deputation to the Orient from the West visited India. In connection with this a Conference was convened by the National Christian Council at Serampore. The purpose of the Conference was to discuss plans for stimulating the study of Church History, as well as for collecting and preserving valuable records of the history of the Church in India. One of the suggestions made was 'the formation of a Church History Association for India'. But unfortunately nothing came out of these proposals for some time.

Nearly three years later, the Senate of Serampore took up the matter. In its meeting of the 7th of December, 1934, the Senate welcomed the proposal that steps should be taken for the formation of a Church History Association for India, Burma and Ceylon. The Rev. Dr. G. H. C. Angus, then the President of Serampore Senate, the late Bishop Pakenham-Walsh, then Principal, Bishop's College, Calcutta, and the Rev. Dr. C. E. Abraham, then Registrar of the Senate of Serampore, jointly called for a meeting on the 1st of February, 1935, at Calcutta, of some leading Christians in the city to consider the formation of the Association.

It was in this meeting that the Church History Association of India, Burma and Ceylon was formed. The meeting adopted certain provisional rules and elected an Executive Committee, with the Most Rev. Foss Westcott, the Metropolitan Bishop of Calcutta, as Chairman, and the Rev. Dr. C. E. Abraham the Secretary. While recognizing that the Executive Committee should be representative of India, Burma and Ceylon, it decided that 'until the time when the Association got into proper working order, the membership of the Executive should be confined to those living in and around Calcutta, so that they could meet often and discuss plans for work without entailing any financial obligation on the Association'.

The first meeting of the Executive was held on the 19th of February, 1935. This meeting adopted a plan of work, and the plan was faithfully followed. The Secretary's statement for the

year 1935 shows that the Secretary was busy collecting information regarding the availability of source materials in North-East India for a history of Christianity in India. Replies had been received from the A.B.F.M.S. in Assam, Bengal, Orissa and Burma, the L.M.S., the Church of Scotland Santal Mission, East Himalayan Mission, etc. A small library, as a nucleus of a first-rate library of source materials to come into being, was formed with a few books, reports, etc., presented by various Societies and individuals. There were also proposals for writing a History of the Christian Church in India and another small volume on the Lives of Saints. A third suggestion entertained was to prepare a book on Biographies of Indian Christians.

From 1936 an Annual Bulletin was published every year. The Bulletin appeared in 1936, 1937, 1938 and 1941, giving information regarding the work of the Association. But the War seriously interfered with that work. The after-effects of the War and the disturbances following Partition virtually brought the work to a standstill. To add to these difficulties, the great President of the Association, the Most Rev. Foss Westcott, died and some of the active members either retired or left the country. The Rt. Rev. Noel Hall of Chota-Nagpur, the new President, and the redoubtable Secretary, the Rev. Dr. C. E. Abraham, at any rate kept the Association alive.

During the first six years, 1935-40:

- (i) Information regarding the availability of source material was gathered.
- (ii) The active co-operation of Missions and Correspondents was enlisted.
- (iii) Plans for the writing of a History of Christianity in India were set afoot and invitations to write sections of it were given to eminent writers like Bishop Stephen Neill.
- (iv) Corresponding members were appointed in various places.
- (v) Interest in the work of the Association was created in different places.
- (vi) Regional Church History Associations were formed as in Dornakal, Andhra.

The National Christian Council was quite interested in the work of the Association as is evident from the letter the Secretary of the Council, the Rev. J. Z. Hodge, wrote to the Secretary of the Association, an extract from which I quote here: 'I may add that interest in your Association is extending. The Andhra Christian Council for example have taken the matter up and are organizing a branch there. I expect you are in touch with them. We hear also of interest developing in Bombay and I think your Executive might now well consider the desirability of giving the Association an all-India basis. We shall be very happy indeed to co-operate with you should you decide to do this by putting the

matter before the various Provincial Christian Councils. We remember that the Association emerged as a result of the Church History Conference held at Serampore and convened by the N.C.C.' (Bulletin 2, page 5).

In 1940 the Executive Committee was reorganized 'so as to include representatives of Missions and Churches outside Bengal.' This was a great step forward for it brought into the Executive such eminent men as Dr. C. E. Chaney (Rangoon), Dr. M. H. Harper (Jubbulpore), Dr. A. H. Sword (Gauhati), the Rev. H. I. Frost (Balasore), the Rev. H. Sumitra (now the Moderator Bishop of the Church of South India), and Dr. W. G. Griffiths.

The Association has to its credit published the following booklets also :

1. *Pioneers and Leaders of the Church in India* (1938),
2. *A Calendar of the Church in India, Burma and Ceylon* (1940) and
3. *The South Indian Apostolate of St. Thomas*, by Mr. K. N. Daniel (1952: the occasion being the 1900th anniversary of St. Thomas).

On the retirement of Bishop Noel Hall, the Rt. Rev. R. W. Bryan, Bishop of Barrackpore, was elected President, and when Dr. Abraham, the founder-Secretary, retired the present Secretary took over.

The Executive, which has a membership of 5, is anxious to continue the good work begun by the founders of the Association and they have already met twice and are doing what is possible to set the Association up again. They are much cheered by the sympathy shown by the Board of Theological Education of the National Christian Council and the real interest evinced by leaders of the Churches and Principals of the Theological colleges whose response to our letters is most encouraging.

The Association has as one of its chief objects the collection of source materials and storing them in archives. It also aims at the publication, in due course, of useful volumes on the history of the Church in India. It will faithfully try to carry out the other aims of the Founders, such as perpetuating the memory of the leaders, stimulating research, and promoting instruction in Church History.

D. A. C.

GRACE

The freedom of the man under grace is founded upon the good pleasure of God, and has no other foundation ; it is the freedom of the will of God in men, and freedom of no other kind. Free in God, ye are imprisoned in Him.

KARL BARTH: The Epistle to the Romans.

Book Reviews

A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians: by F. W. Beare. Adam and Charles Black, London. Pp. 182. Price 16s.

The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians: by R. P. Martin. The Tyndale Press, London. Pp. 186. Price 8s. 6d.

As New Testament scholarship takes new strides, and as research in the field affords much scope for constant reconsideration and new presentations of both the problems of introduction and exegesis, the commentaries listed above have a significant contribution to make. Of the Epistles of Paul, *Philippians* has not received the same treatment by New Testament scholars as the rest of the books in the Pauline corpus, and therefore commentaries of the type listed above are doubly welcome. It need hardly be stressed that *Philippians*, written with a signal maturity and intensified by personal and emotional witness to the power of the Christian life, is one of Paul's most sublime and sacred writings, where the position accorded to Christ and the Gospel remains unparalleled and arresting.

The first commentary appears in the rather new and recent series 'Black's New Testament Commentaries', in which already C. K. Barrett's *Romans*, C. S. C. William's *Acts of the Apostles* and A. R. C. Leaney's *St. Luke* have been published. A good portion of the book is devoted to problems of introduction, which takes into consideration all the various views regarding the place of origin of the Epistle, each view being given its fair due. The exegetical part gains an added value because of the author's own translation and this has a good deal of bearing in making the interpretation fresh and enlivening. A note of about 15 pages is appended on the 'Kenotic' Christology by E. R. Fairweather.

When in these days acquaintance with the original texts is becoming less and less, 'Greekless' readers will find in such a book as this under review a special interest. They are enabled to enter into the spirit of the times and the meaning of the verses in a remarkably simple and challenging way. Its usefulness is enhanced as it has scholarly interests, but meets at the same time the needs of the common man. This commentary has much that can inspire and spur New Testament students to a deeper understanding of the Word of God.

The second book appears in the series 'Tyndale New Testament Commentaries' edited by R. V. G. Tasker. This series is meant to encourage average readers to enter into the deeper insights which the New Testament writings carry with them. It is priced moderately so that it may gain a wider circulation.

The introduction starts with a description of the Church at Philippi and the history behind the city, which is followed by a long and detailed section on the questions of date and place of composition in which a good survey of the various possibilities is attempted. What follows afterwards in the same introductory chapter contains very new and useful material, which serves well to bring out the specific relevance of this letter of Paul. The analysis which precedes the commentary section gives the contents of the Epistle in a well-arranged and systematic manner. The Authorized (King James) Version is used. A special feature in this commentary is that it paraphrases the sections which makes it easy to follow the themes in their entirety, in spite of the verse by verse treatment. This helps to make the central points clear to the readers. This ought to find a place in any collection of standard and recognized value.

Gurukul

J. KUMARESAN

Ethical Studies—Personal, Social and Religious: by James Kellock. The Christian Students' Library No. 19. The Christian Literature Society. Pp. 315. Price Rs.3/75.

This is a book which should be read by all those who are perplexed by the changing social values of their society. Especially in the Afro-Asian countries, which are going through revolutionary changes, this book will be of great help in matters regarding personal and social ethics. Science and technology have invaded every aspect of human life, thus creating conditions that have no parallel in history. People are breaking loose from the bondages of tradition, but are ill-equipped to regulate their lives individually or in relation to other fellow beings in a manner that will enable them to grow to their full stature. The consequence is personal disintegration and social disorganization. Greed, selfishness and hatred tend to become the motivating force in all social relationships, pushing into the background the ethical principles of creative relationships. This degeneration of personal and social ethics should be a concern of all, especially of the Church in India, and attempts should be made to remind the present generation of the source and end of good conduct, which the author of this book has done with considerable success.

The book is divided into five sections: namely, 1. Following After That Which is Good, 2. Some Familiar Things in Ethical Perspective, 3. Some Ultimate Questions, 4. Responsibility: Individual and Social, and 5. Ethics in Religious Thought.

The author begins with answering questions which, though seemingly simple, lead on to some basic ethical issues, such as the eight cardinal virtues (pp. 11-19). These virtues are 'the fruits of giving ourself to that which is beyond us' (p. 21) and thus lead us to an orderly, self-respecting, unselfish, useful and harmonious life.

Then the author discusses with remarkable clarity some of those areas of life, such as work, leisure, money, etc., which have assumed great importance in modern society, and points out the right attitude that one should have towards them. There is no doubt left in the mind of the reader that the author has in mind the conditions as obtaining in India of today. He is particularly familiar with the perplexities of the young man, and helps him to seek in religion a firm basis for good conduct.

In the last section the author has dealt with the 'meta-physical or religious' background which very much determines the social conduct of an individual. It is through religion that the ethical attitude of a people becomes related 'with the meaning of existence and with ultimate reality' (p. 215). The Indian reader will find here a stimulating comparison of ethical principles as originating from Christ and of Hinduism with its various interpretations.

The book on the whole will serve a very useful purpose if widely read by young people and those who are dealing with them. Due to the great emphasis on secularism these days an attempt is being made to teach ethics as separated from religion. This has made ethics a meaningless, self-imposed torture and many young people have disregarded it altogether. This book reminds us, by implication, of the dangerous consequences of this form of secular ethics.

The Department of Sociology
Hislop College
Nagpur

T. S. WILKINSON

The Christian in Society: by L. M. Schiff. The Christian Students' Library No. 21. The Christian Literature Society. Pp. 246. Price Rs.3/00.

There can be two methods employed for the study of the life and culture of a people; one is the historical and the other functional: L. M. Schiff has made a valuable contribution by the adoption of both. This dual approach has lent both depth and breadth to his analysis of a Christian in society. Having rightly indicated at the very outset that 'in India and other Asian countries the Churches have been somewhat dominated by pietism and are at their weakest in sociological analysis' (p. vii) the author proceeds to trace, in the first part of the book, the development of Christian social thought in history. The reason for this late adoption of sociological techniques by Churches is partly due

to the fact that sociology came to be recognized as a scientific discipline fairly recently, especially in India. Churches even now are guided mostly by impressions rather than by objective social facts, because every one feels qualified to speak about society. Schiff has given full recognition to the political, social and economic situation of a people and thus helps them to work out a creative relationship between their temporal and spiritual citizenship.

In the six chapters of the first part of the book the author sets the historical background of Christian social thought, beginning with 'The Social Tradition of Israel' (p. 1). The material has been divided in accordance with the social, economic, and political condition of the period. In these periods the prophetic nature of the Church, its frustrations and even rebellion has been clearly pointed out. The chapters are well integrated and the reader finds no difficulty in finding the link between them. Yet there is no mistaking this record for historical determinism, because God's purpose and action in history has been brought out significantly.

In the second part of the book the vast area of 'The Theology of Society' and 'The Sociology of Religion' is examined. These two chapters should stimulate further discussion and research. However, the comparison that sociology 'sees sin in the environment' whereas theology 'sees the root of sin in man himself' (p. 124) will be challenged by sociologists and probably also by theologians. According to sociology man is not entirely subject to the influences of the environment but has been endowed with the creative ability to both mould and select his environment. What determines his choice is a question which the sociologist finds difficult in answering. On the other hand, theology cannot deny that the environment is very much responsible for sinful acts.

The author illustrates with various examples the close relationship between culture and religion and has very aptly defined 'culture', a term which is more often misused than used. A dynamic religion alone can direct and mould a dynamic culture. It is, therefore, the essential task of the Christian to interpret Christianity through the imperfect medium of culture.

The third and the final part of the book deals with certain concrete issues which confront the Christian of today. There are competing political and economic systems in the midst of which a Christian citizen of any country finds himself caught. Confused by the contradictions and tensions he looks into the scriptures for a cut-and-dried answer but is disappointed. The same is true in regard to sex and marriage. How then can he overcome these difficulties? The author answers this question in the last chapter. Here he makes a very valid comparison between the approaches adopted by the Roman Catholic and the non-Roman Churches.

L. M. Schiff has spent over twenty years in India, teaching in colleges and also serving as pastor. As such he has been in

close association with the people, especially the youth, of India and strongly feels that the Church so far has done little to understand and tackle contemporary problems in a scientific manner. Through this book he has given a very good lead which should be followed up by greater study and research. Furthermore, he has provided a basis for conversation between students of theology and sociology. I hope this book finds the right place in the study programme of colleges and Churches.

Nagpur

T. S. WILKINSON

Kagawa, Japanese Prophet : by Jessie M. Trout. World Christian Books. United Society for Christian Literature. Lutterworth Press. Pp. 80. Price Rs.2/03.

The need for Christian biographic literature is very great in the East. The book written by Miss J. M. Trout, I think, will therefore receive a warm welcome in the younger Churches of Asia. She has succeeded in her attempt to make known the life of a prophet-saint in 'Kagawa'.

The title reminds the Church of her need of prophets of vision and conviction. The Church in our age lacks Christ-like men and women. The Japanese Christian whom Miss Trout introduces to us proved in his life the character of a saint as well as the zeal and power of a prophet. The spiritual power expressed by him profoundly challenged the non-Christian atmosphere in which he lived. Prince Higashikuni, the post-war Prime Minister of Japan, told Kagawa '... Only Jesus Christ was able to love His enemies. Therefore, Mr. Kagawa, if Japan is to be revived, we need Jesus Christ as the basis of our national life ...' We see here the tremendous influence he had upon the statesman.

Miss Trout was a close associate of Dr. Kagawa, and hence she could collect moving and thrilling incidents in his life to illustrate the glory of his personality. Her language is simple and lucid. Her pen portrays a figure who was the friend of the poor and the down-trodden, who went right into the midst of problems insoluble to many. The Eastern mind was able to appreciate and glorify him, for he was the revelation of Christ in their midst. He was a prophet, a poet and a proclaimer of the gospel of love, the Hosea of Japan. Miss Trout's unsophisticated language helps the readers to see Christ through Kagawa, in the slums of Kobe, in the huts of the poor and the sick, and among the labourers and farmers of Japan. Through his unostentatious life he laboured to manifest love in action, among the unwanted, and those uncared for by society.

The authoress has succeeded in conveying an answer to the socio-economic ills of the present day. 'Dr. Kagawa's work', she says, 'sets out to humanize and Christianize the social and industrial order, through making Jesus' way of life the norm in every

relationship of the ruler and the ruled, the capitalist and the labourer, the employer and the employee, the owner and the tenant, wherever man meets man' (p. 18). Chapter six brings before us the Christian solution for social maladies.

The major part of the book is written in Kagawa's own words and is in the form of an autobiography. Miss Trout introduces Dr. Kagawa to her readers and withdraws then to the background, allowing the prophet to speak. This is a novel way of writing a book, but is very effective and touching. The reader therefore can hear the testimony of Dr. Kagawa himself. Chapter two echoes the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians. How profound and clear he was in his understanding of the true message of the gospel ! Chapter five gives us the way of victorious life in Christ. From chapters one to eight of this inspiring book one gets not only the life history of a saintly prophet but also a new revelation of the purpose of one's own life. The life we live is for loving, and the love with which we love is the essential nature of God. Love in action to Kagawa was Christ in action in the terrestrial realm. In the last chapter, Miss Trout gives a translation of some of Kagawa's songs.

Two comments may be made. It would have been good if the authoress could have thrown some more light on Kagawa's domestic life, to show the way in which his family was an asset in his life's work. Also, some concluding personal observations on the after-effects of Dr. Kagawa's work in Japan would have been useful. This would not have made the book too bulky: it is only 80 pages long.

But in spite of these minor comments, it must be said that the authoress has given us a very vivid picture of the man and his life. The book reveals in unequivocal terms an effective method of evangelism for adoption in Asian countries, where socio-political problems are to the forefront. Both the foreign missionary and other missionary Christians will benefit greatly by it. And it can also be recommended to a wider reading public.

Serampore

K. V. MATHEW

Freedom and Immortality : by I. T. Ramsey. S.C.M. Pp. 157. Price 16s.

What is Life ? : by Dr. M. Dixon. I.V.F. Pp. 19. 9d.

There are two different kinds of misconceptions regarding the relative merits and truth of metaphysics and ordinary daily language employed in techniques of contemporary empiricism. Some have such intense affection for the latter that they necessarily deny metaphysics. On the other hand 'there are others who defend metaphysics exclusively ; but because they do not give to empirical language the weightage it merits, they must necessarily trade in occult realms and shadowy worlds.' The

author of *Freedom and Immortality* registers his protest against these two popular misconceptions ; 'which means that the book has been fighting on two battle-fronts at once' (p. 152); the reader realizes that victory won under such a necessity is doubly praiseworthy. This is exactly what the author has achieved. He has shown the strength and value of both and has brought within the compass of this volume the most profound ideas concerning freedom and immortality.

The title of the book reminds one of Kant, for whom immortality, freedom and existence of God were postulates of practical reason. While the author has not referred often to the great philosopher, still he has proved that his (Kant's) claim was very reliable, by showing that these two topics of freedom and immortality are properly united, because each makes a similar sort of claim about the universe ; because each appeals to a similar kind of situation not restricted to the 'observables' of sense experience.

The first two chapters of this book deal with freedom, and the author shows that freedom not only involves on the subjective side a characteristic sort of decision in which a person *transcends* his behaviour, but also that such a decision occurs as a response to a challenge, called duty or obligation, which on the objective side transcends observables through which it is expressed. The author thinks that 'it is a logical howler to talk of this response in terms of casual determination.' This 'duty', religiously speaking, is God's will and is not in any way opposed to God's omnipotence. 'Freedom and omnipotence are no more incompatible than freedom and obligation.' It is the claim of the author that to be free is to be immortal, because in the choice or decision, there is, as was pointed out, an element which transcends the spatio-temporal.

The next three chapters deal with 'immortality'. In dealing with these, nothing startlingly new has been brought out by the author. But in very lucid and clear language supported by many apposite and extremely amusing incidents, the author throws new light on old problems. He successfully shows that which is valuable, in old metaphysics and modern empiricism. Related topics like 'pre-existence of souls' and 'universal immortality' are also given due consideration. Christian ministers will find the section on distinctively Christian claims a nugget of gold.

His language is free from metaphysical jargon, but he has not lost anything of precision or accuracy because he has not used technical words. On the other hand, like the true artist, he has hidden his art, artfully. The layman who has had no training in metaphysics can read with profit this book. But that does not mean that this volume is easy to read like a novel. The author is dealing with abstruse thoughts and difficult subjects and only a careful study shows how remarkable his success is in defending many of the traditional concepts in a manner acceptable to the modern scientist and empiricist.

The old Tamil poet, Valluvar, has said that the great man receives data from all people, but evaluates them and finds the truth behind each statement. Judged by this standard, the author is very great. He gathers materials from everywhere, from ordinary language, from common phrases, from great and learned men. Thus just because he is defending the traditional theological concepts, he does not neglect other ideas. In fact from his evaluation of MacTaggart and non-Christian religions, he is willing to accept the pre-existence of the self or 'I', though with the qualification of '*discontinuity*'. That is for him 'one of the best pictures, for immortality may be that of a stratified personality, extending backwards and forwards without end, but surrounded by doctrines of Creation and the Last Things.' So, we commend this book to all, especially to theological students, unreservedly for careful study, and we do hope the author will write many more books on other theological doctrines as well.

Dr. Malcolm Dixon's *What is Life?* is a pamphlet. It is a reprint of the author's heart-searching presidential address, delivered at the Inter-varsity Conference in London in April 1959. It is published by the Inter-varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions. The author, an eminent biologist, has chosen as subject for his address one related to his own field of work, and has stirred our thoughts by showing the nature and wonder of life. He has shown that there is only one attitude possible. When faced with this wonder, he says 'There is only one attitude possible. Because we live, we have the power of loving and serving God. Our life is God's gift. Our lives belong to Him. Shall we not give Him back the life we owe?'

This wonderful phenomenon, life, according to this author is lived at various levels. On the lowest level is material life: just above it is the life of the organism. In higher successions follow the life of the soul, the life of the spirit and the life of the Church. By the word Church he means the true Church, 'the mystical body of Christ.' He brings out very clearly that just as the life of the organism is the co-operative life of various living cells, even so the life of the Church is the co-operative living together of persons. 'Christ is the head of the body, the Church,' and 'Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular,' are his quotations from Paul.

Since Dr. Malcolm Dixon is an eminent scientist, the tension between science and religion is overcome more by the integrated experience of the author than by any reasoned statements on the relation between reason and revelation. In the first part of the book the scientist explains scientific facts. In the second part, the devotee accepts as authoritative what is revealed in the Bible. Thus there are no less than twenty-six quotations in the three pages dealing with this section. Of course the most important fact brought out in this pamphlet is the fact that death makes no

difference to the eternal life whose beginning is now, in this world.

The two books reviewed here go together. Professor Ramsey's book supplying the arguments for the reasonableness of immortality, and this pamphlet the challenge of the fact of immortality.

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R. D. IMMANUEL

Men of Unity: by Bishop Stephen Neill. S.C.M. Pp. 192. Rs.3/66 (Available through Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, 5 Russell Street, Calcutta 16).

This S.C.M. Press 'paperback' is a first-rate little textbook of modern Church History in the ecumenical movement. In one sense it is a popular book. It greets its readers with glossy photos of the present Pope, and William Temple, and D. T. Niles (and others) side by side on the front cover. And it approaches its subject (as the title shows) through biographical portraits of personalities in the ecumenical movement. Besides those just mentioned, the following figures appear in the book: John R. Mott, Archbishop Soderblom, Bishop Brent, Bishop Azariah, Archbishop Germanos, J. H. Oldham, William Paton, Hendrik Kraemer, Bonhoeffer, and Visser 't Hooft. There is no attempt to glamorize these chief characters (or the ecumenical movement as a whole): the descriptions are enthusiastic, but candid and honest.

But there is also much clever interweaving of information about all the big Conferences since Edinburgh 1910, and much wise comment on the deepest issues confronting the world-wide Church in recent and present times. Bishop Neill, as a joint-author of the official History of the Ecumenical Movement, and as himself a leading figure in the movement, has all the facts at his finger-tips and here distils his knowledge into something very readable indeed. It is well done. The portrait of Bishop Azariah leads on to an account of the movement towards Church Union and to the story of negotiations in various parts of the world. The portrait of Archbishop Soderblom of Sweden leads on to a description of the 'Life and Work' movement and the Stockholm Conference of 1925. And so on.

To many of the readers of this *Journal* much of this information will be already familiar. But they will hardly fail to enjoy the book. One of the best parts comes at the end, where the author explains the real live issues lying behind the current, rather technical-sounding matter of the integration of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches. This material will be less familiar to some. The book should be read together with another important new S.C.M. publication: *A Decisive Hour for the Christian Mission*, which reproduces the addresses delivered at the East Asian Christian Conference at

Kuala Lumpur in 1959. The two together help one to understand better the present important stage in ecumenical affairs. It will, of course, also help us in our looking forward to the next meeting of the World Council of Churches in Delhi in December, 1961.

The present book, in a slightly expanded form, has been published in America under the title, *Brothers of the Faith*, costing four dollars. The S.C.M. Press is to be congratulated on producing much the same book for us at a price no higher than some volumes of the Christian Students' Library.

A. C. M. H.

History's Lessons for Tomorrow's Mission : a collection of essays and articles. Published by the World Student Christian Federation, 13 Rue Calvin, Geneva, Switzerland. No price stated.

The sub-title, *Milestones in the History of Missionary Thinking*, gives us the clue to the nature and purpose of this collection of essays. The essays are by well-known missionary thinkers and scholars of today, and aim to provide for the members of the S.C.M. 'the essential background for their study of the Life and Mission of the Church today'. It is produced because of the conviction that 'we have lessons to learn from the history of the Church and in particular of its thinking about its missionary task', and because of the growing realization today that Church History is not a source for our denominational self-satisfaction and justification. To study the history of Christianity as an unfolding of the pattern of the Life and Mission of the Church in each successive generation is to know the value of Church History in terms of answers to three questions which a student of Church History asks. He asks them about (a) the Life and Mission of the Church for the whole of humanity and (b) the Life and Mission of the Church in his own particular situation. The three questions are: 1. What is the Church in this world to *be*? 2. What is the Church in this world to *do*? 3. What is the Church to *become* both now and hereafter?

Philippe Maury's able introductory chapter on 'What is the Value of Church History?' is followed by 25 chapters by present-day scholars and thinkers of the ecumenical world on the various aspects of the Mission of the Church down to the present day. We are pleased to see among the contributors Laurence E. Browne (formerly of Bishop's College, Calcutta), D. H. W. Gensichen (formerly of Gurukul, Madras), V. E. Devadutt (formerly of Serampore College), P. D. Devanandan (Director of the C.I.S.R.S., Bangalore), Bishop Neill (a former Bishop of Tinnevely) and John Foster (recently visiting Professor at our theological colleges). There are also articles by K. S. Latourette, H. Kraemer, W. R. Hogg and Canon Max Warren, C.M.S. General Secretary, who will be visiting India and Pakistan in the winter of 1960-61. There

is also a chapter on the 'Evolution of the Catholic Idea of Mission', and chapters giving a bibliography of books on Missions available in English, French and German.

Those who are deeply concerned with the Life and Mission of the Church will find in this volume an admirable introduction to some of the more important aspects in the history of the communication of the Gospel, and will be encouraged 'to find their place in the great effort which the Church of Jesus Christ has been making for twenty centuries to understand the mission entrusted to it by God and to fulfil it in our changing world'.

B. M.

Worship and the Church's Mission and Unity. Copies can be had from either the Principal, United Theological College, Bangalore 1, or from the Tract and Book Society, Bangalore 1, at Rs.1/50 single copy or Rs.12 per dozen (postage extra).

This is *A Report of the Third Indian Conference on Worship* which was held at Bangalore from 26th to 30th May, 1960, under the auspices of the East Asia Theological Commission on Worship set up by the World Council of Churches and the Ecumenical Study Commission of the National Christian Council. The First and Second Indian Conferences on Worship were held in 1955 (Bangalore) and in 1957 (Matheran, Bombay). It is a matter of interest that under the auspices of the East Asia Commission similar conferences have been held in Ceylon, Indonesia, the Philippines and Japan. Before the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches meets in New Delhi it is planned to convene a meeting of the whole East Asia Commission in November 1961 at Bangalore.

The *Report* gives a report of this conference, an interim agreed statement on Worship in three sections (Worship and the Unity of the Church, Worship and the Mission of the Church, and Indigenization of Worship), a bibliography of books and articles in journals on Worship in India, and six of the papers read at the conference. It is good to see among the papers read one by Fr. Hambye, S.J., on 'Some Characteristics of the Catholic Liturgical Movement Today'. It is to be regretted that no papers were read either on the Liturgical Movement in the Church of England today or on the Liturgical Life of the Orthodox Church, both of which would have also contributed to the discussion on Worship at the conference.

It is gratifying to note that in the Agreed Statement two important factors relating to indigenization of worship are recognized. On page 14 we read 'it was affirmed in our discussions that if the characteristic marks of indigenization in worship are naturalness and spontaneity our experiments in this direction seem to lack exactly these questions'. But unfortunately the word 'lack' is misprinted as 'lock'. We may see in this small error an

unconscious pointer to what is felt by many with regard to revisions of Prayer Books! All recent experiments have *locked* up the qualities of naturalness and spontaneity for ever! We may have to wait for the disappearance of our liturgical experts who impose on long-suffering congregations continuously revised liturgical forms of worship cleverly devised to conform to existing denominational patterns before we can really be free to express our worship more naturally and spontaneously. What is needed is freedom from bondage to the liturgical books of the 'Western' and 'Eastern' Churches and liberation from man-centred worship.

On page 15 we have this pious statement concluding the Agreed Statement: 'A truly indigenous worship will be the natural offering of a Church that knows itself to be God's people in India, a Church alive to its mission of interpreting Christ to India.' How can we interpret Christ to India when in our devotional life and in our liturgical worship we have made no vital contact with the rich heritage of devotional life, private and corporate, as practised by our fellow-men of other *living* Faiths, as well as with their devotional literature, which sets forth the spontaneous and natural outpourings of mind and heart touched and transformed by the Divine? Indigenization of worship means much more than tinkering with the framework of Christian public worship available today; it should be an understanding with sympathy of the sacramental outlook of life which permeates the Hindu view of life and way of life. This will mean learning to worship God in the beauty of holiness and in spirit and in truth in the way in which the One, Holy and Living God has made these known to His people in this land in their spiritual pilgrimage and heritage. Maybe our thinking, study and discussion on worship will become more meaningful and fruitful if the Commission would make possible a study of the actual experiments in worship being offered in our Ashrams, and in some of the rural areas of our Churches, in the light of the above.

B. M.

REPENTANCE

What is repentance? Not the last and noblest and most refined achievement of the righteousness of men in the service of God, but the first elemental act of the righteousness of God in the service of men; the work that God has written in their hearts and which, because it is from God and not from men, occasions joy in heaven; that looking forward to God, and to Him only, which is recognized only by God and by God Himself.

KARL BARTH: The Epistle to the Romans.

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